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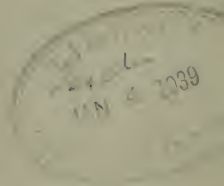
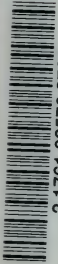
THE HOOPOE  
A STUDY IN EUROPEAN FOLKLORE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF GERMANIC LANGUAGES  
AND LITERATURES  
1938

By  
JOHN GOTTHOLD KUNSTMANN

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## PREFACE

On the following pages I offer what I have collected of the lore of the hoopoe. So far as possible, I shall arrange my material geographically and chronologically. I shall present it in the following order: 1. The hoopoe, the crested bird; 2. the hoopoe, the "doctor" (folk-medicine, magical and similar practices and beliefs); 3. the hoopoe, an exponent of filial piety; 4. the hoopoe, the cuckoo's sexton (der Kuckucksküster); 5. the hoopoe, the bird that fouls its nest.

The larger part of the material is presented in order to support the claim that the hoopoe in European folklore in general and in German folklore in particular belongs where it is placed in the Pentateuch: among the birds of abomination.<sup>1</sup> Its role in the popular poem of the Vogelhochzeit might give rise to the objection that the characteristic rhyme Wiedehopf - Topf is primarily responsible for the association of the bird with sexual and obscene matters. To be sure, the possibilities of finding a convenient and striking rhyme as well as similar considerations have undoubtedly influenced and facilitated the rise and continuance of the tradition defining the hoopoe as a "nasty" bird, but, as we shall see, these possibilities have not created ab ovo the fundamental conception of the hoopoe as a "nasty" bird.

I owe thanks to my teacher, Professor Archer Taylor of the University of Chicago. He has given freely books, time, information, counsel, and that stimulus which one receives from contact with a gentleman and scholar. "Deo, parentibus, et magistris non potest satis gratiae rependi."

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<sup>1</sup>Lev. 11: 19; Deut. 14: 18. Early English translations, including the King James' Version, render דָּוָה' (dūkh'iphath) with "lapwing"; see International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Hoopoe"; J. H. Bondi, "Etymologisches," Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, L (1896), 293.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE HOOPOE, THE CRESTED BIRD . . . . .	1
II. THE HOOPOE, "THE DOCTOR" . . . . .	11
III. THE HOOPOE, AN EXPONENT OF FILIAL PIETY . . . . .	22
IV. THE HOOPOE, THE CUCKOO'S SEXTON . . . . .	30
V. THE HOOPOE, THE BIRD THAT FOULS ITS NEST . . . . .	40
CONCLUSION . . . . .	81





CHAPTER I  
THE HOOPOE, THE CRESTED BIRD

Wiedehopf, Wiedehopf!  
Welcher Schmuck an deinem Kopf!  
Keiner, der die Federn sträubt,  
Ist so schön wie du gehäubt.<sup>1</sup>

The hoopoe (upupa epops L.) is an old-word bird. It hails from Africa. It seems to be well known on the continent of Europe. In England, on the other hand, it is something of a rare bird. Modern scientific descriptions of the hoopoe invariably mention its erectile crest as an outstanding characteristic.<sup>2</sup> Likewise do the scientific and pseudo-scientific zoological and ornithological accounts of the ancient and medieval writers tell of the crown or crest of this bird. More frequently, however, the feathered tuft of the hoopoe is merely alluded to. Since the fact that the hoopoe is a crested bird is not of primary importance for my purpose I shall confine myself to (1) an enumeration of authors and passages, mainly ancient and medieval, telling of the hoopoe as a crested bird, and (2) an enumeration of the etiological accounts, explaining the provenience of the crest.<sup>3</sup>

(1) The Hoopoe, a Crested Bird

The earliest record of the hoopoe is pictorial. In a painting of the XIIth dynasty (ca. 1900 B.C.), the hoopoe recognizable by its crest is perching with other birds on the Sont-bush (Acacia nilotica Del.). This painting is on the walls of

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<sup>1</sup>A. E. Brehm, Das Leben der Vögel, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup>Royal Natural History, IV (London, 1895); Brehm's Tierleben, ed. Pechuel and Loesche, Vögel, II (Leipzig-Vienna, 1891), 29 ff.; Wood, Nat. Hist., II, 200; H. Suolahti, Die deutschen Vogelnamen. Eine wortgeschichtliche Untersuchung (Strassburg, 1909), pp. 11-15; W. R. Dawson, "The Lore of the Hoopoe," Ibis, 12th ser., I (1925), 31-39.

<sup>3</sup>See M. Grünbaum, "Beiträge zur vergleichenden Mythologie der Hagada," Z. d. dt. morgenl. Ges., XXXI (1877), 206 ff.; Bondi, op. cit., I (1896), 292 f.; IV (1850), 59; IX (1855), 596; XXV (1871), 245.

the tomb of Knumhope at Beni Hassan, Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

In Crete, Sir Arthur Evans discovered a painted frieze with pictures of birds and among them the hoopoe.<sup>2</sup>

Ovid (d. ca. 17 A.D.), *Metam.* VI. 671: Tereus was changed "in volucrem, cui stant in vertice cristae." Cf. "facies armata videtur" (*Metam.* V. 672).<sup>3</sup>

Pliny (d. 79 A.D.), *Historia Naturalis*, Book X, chap. 30 (= X, § 86): "upupa...crista visenda plictabili (plicatili), contrahens eam subrigensque per longitudinem capitis"; cf. *ibid.*, XI, § 122: "stymphalidi cirro"--did Pliny picture the Stymphalian birds as hoopoes? Cf. Rabelais, *Gargantua und Pantagruel*, II, 1 (ed. G. Regis, Leipzig, 1839), p. 879.

Pausanias (d. 180 A.D.), *Graeciae Descriptio* (ed. Hitzig-Bluemer), X, 4, 8: οὗτος ὁ ὄρνις (= ἔτοψ) κεφαλῆς μὲν ὀλίγον ἔστιν ὑπὲρ ὀφθαλμοῦ, ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ δὲ οἱ τὰ πτερὰ ἐς λόφον (crest) ἐκχῆμα ἔξῃσται.

Hezychius (5th cent. A.D. ?), *Lexicon*: μακροκίρκανος (having a long crest) ἔτοψ· δὲ τὸ ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς καὶ αὐτῆς λόφον καὶ κορυθαίολον (armed with a plumed helmet) αὐτὸν λείρουσιν.<sup>4</sup>

Isidore (d. 636 A.D.), *Etymologiarum Lib. XII*; Book VII, 66: "...cristis extantibus galeata."<sup>5</sup> This passage is quoted in Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856 A.D.), op. II, *De Universo* Lib. VIII (= Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, CXI, col. 252) and in Nicolai Pergameni *Dialogus Creaturarum*, reprinted in J. G. Th. Grässe, *Die beiden ältesten lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters* ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.", CXLVIII [Tübingen, 1880]), dial. 59, pp. 201-203; dial. 59 adds: "...placide cristata pennisque variata." Isidore's source seems to be Hieronymus, in *Zach.*, XXV, 1521

<sup>1</sup>See Dawson, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>See Dawson, pp. 39, 593 f.

<sup>3</sup>See E. Oder, "Der Wiedehopf in der griechischen Sage," *Rheinisches Museum*, N.F. XLIII (1888), 541-56; D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (Oxford, 1895), pp. 55 ff. and the allusions in Brant's *Warrenschiff* (ed. K. Goedeke), p. 27, line 41; Jörg Wickram, *Ovide Metamorphosen*, 6, 22 (ed. Bolte, "Bibliothek des litterarischen Vereins Stuttgart," CCXXXVII [Tübingen, 1905], p. 297, lines 1476 ff.). Compare also Aristophanes, *Aves*, 16: ἔτοψ ὄρνις ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων; Aelian, *de natura animalium*, XVI, 6; C. S. Köhler, *Das Tierleben* (Leipzig, 1881), p. 186.

<sup>4</sup>In Thompson, *Glossary*, p. 112.

<sup>5</sup>Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, LXXXII, col. 468.

(=Damigeron, de lapidibus, in Pitra, Analecta sacra II, 644 f. n. 65 ; cf. Herm. Koir. 20,12).<sup>1</sup>

Odo de Ciringtonia (fl. ca. 1180 A.D.), Fabulae, LI (LX): "varietate colorum distincta et eximie cristata," in L. Hervieux, Les Fabulistes Latins (Paris, 1884), II, 639 (Odonis de Ceritonia Fabulae, ex Bibliothecae Regiae Monacensis MSo Codice Latino 8356).

Heinrich von dem Türlin (ca. 1215 A.D.), Diu Cröne, ed. G. H. F. Scholl ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.," XXVII Tübingen, 1852 ), p. 78, lines 6302 ff., contains an allusion to crest of hoopoe (ze kopfe).

Ezzo'ddin Mocadessi (Mohammedan preacher, born in Jerusalem, d. 1280) mentions (original in Arabic) hoopoe's crown, quoted by O. Dähnhardt, Natursagen (Leipzig-Berlin, 1907), I, 325.

A crown or crest is also mentioned in Kisa'i's description of the hoopoe: yellow bill, green feet, beautiful plumage, rich colors, on its head a crest (Arabic; in G. Salzberger, Die Salomo-Sage in der semitischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Sagenkunde (1907), 75). For other Arabic and Persian references see M. Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sagenkunde (Leiden, 1893), 232.

Seelmann's list of bird assemblies<sup>2</sup> (Vogelsprachen), no. 2 (ca. 1500) from Munich Library: De wedehoppe (says): "Ick byn een vogel schone, Ick drage vp mijnen hove de ene kronen."

Thomas Murner, Die Schelmen Zunft (1512), no. 32: Der unnüz Vogel. The illustration shows a crested bird. Although not named, there is abundant evidence that the "good-for-nothing" (unnüz) bird is the hoopoe. Cf. J. Scheible, Das Kloster I (this is the 1567 edition), 866 f.

Rabelais, Gargantua and Pantagruel (ca. 1532): "verkaselt wie ein Widhopf" = "cowled like a hoopoe." Cf. Gargantua und Pantagruel (ed. G. Regis, Leipzig, 1832), I, 66; II, I, 97; I, 817; II, I, 804: looks like a hoopoe because the crest of the hoopoe resembles papal tiara. Compare the expression from Laubach

<sup>1</sup>See Max Wellmann, Der Physiologus. Eine religions-geschichtlich--naturwissenschaftliche Untersuchung=Philologus, Supplementband XXII (Leipzig, 1931), p. 40, note 114.

<sup>2</sup>In Jahrbuch d. Ver. f. niederdeutsche Sprachforschung, XIV (1888), 143; this will be referred to henceforth as "Seelmann's List."

(Hunsrück): "sie sieht aus wie ein widop (Wiedehopf)," said of a girl whose hair does not lie smoothly but stands up from the head. Cf. Zeitschrift für deutsche Mundarten (1911), p. 235.

Bartholomeus, de Proprietatibus Rerum (London, 1535), Book XII, chap. 37: "...the lapwing (=hoopoe)...is copped" (=crested on the head"), in Dawson, p. 38.

Seelmann's List no. 1 (1541, Stockholm MS): De wedehoppe (says): "Ick bin [ein] voghel ghar schone Und draghe uppe mynem havede eyne krone" (in Jahrbuch, p. 135).

Burkhard Waldis, Esopus (ca. 1550; 3d ed., 1557), Die LXXVI. Fabel: Von der Wiedhopffen: "Der Adler...setzt die Widhopff oben an, Darumb das sie trug eine Kron, Het Federn vieler Farben gestalt." Cf. Esopus (ed. H. Kurz, Leipzig, 1862), I, 266 f.; II, no. 76; note in II, 106 (quotes as source for this fable: Abstemius, 45, ap. Nev. 553, De upupa indigne honorata).

Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof, Wendunmuth (1563), IV, 60: "Hochzeitlich beylager...., darzu auch der widhopff geladen, umb seines prächtigen gewandes und königlichen kronen willen andern vögeln weit fürgezogen." Cf. Wendunmuth, ed. H. Osterley ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.", XCVIII [1869]), 283 f., VI, 60.

Meisterlieder der Kolmarer Handschrift (15th cent.?), ed. Karl Bartsch ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.", LXVIII [Stuttgart, 1862]), p. 20: "Ein schrift eins vogels list bekennet,/der zuo latin ist uppupā genennet.../ Sin vedern sint manoverwic schöne,/ Of zinem houpf ein angenehmen cröne..."

Johannes Ravisius Textor, Theatrum Poeticum etc. (Basel, 1600), p. 987: "Epops avicula est...cristata"; p. 999: "upupa avis cristata...cristam habet plicatilem."

Wolfhart Spangenberg, Ganez-König (1607; ed. Ernst Martin in Ausgewählte Dichtungen von Wolfhart Spangenberg = Elsässische Litteraturdenkmäler aus dem XIV-XVII. Jahrhundert, ed. by Ernst Martin and Erich Schmidt, Vol. IV [Straszbürg, 1887]), lines 326-330: the birds are electing a king, "Die Landleut aber zu der fahrt/ Wehlen zum König den Widhopff: Weil er auch tregt auff seinem kopff/ Ein Cron/ die jhm sein Haupt bedeckt/ Damit er auch manchen erschreckt." See also R. Wossidlo, Mecklenburgische Volksüberlieferungen, II, 1 (Wismar, 1899), note to no. 987 on pp. 391 f.

Das geistliche Vogel-Gesang (17th cent., Seelmann's List no. 17): "Der Widhopf...Sein Cron er allzeit mit sich führt."

This is, substantially, the same as the Wiedehopf-strophe in Des Knaben Wunderhorn (ed. Birlinger-Crecelius, II, 465); cf. also Wackernagel, Voces variae animantium, p. 130, no. 35.

Vogel-Schul (1700, Breslau = Seelmann's List, no. 18):  
"Mit schönen Federn ist die Wiedhopff zwar geziert."

Oedipodiana seu Sphingis aenigmata...per P. Franciscum à S. Barbara è Scholis Piis (Oppau, 1732): "Rex fueram, sic crista probat..." This is no. 959 of this riddle-collection. The answer is upupa.

Goethe, Westöstlicher Divan. Buch der Liebe. "Gruss":  
"Hudhud (= hoopoe) lief einher, Die Krone entfaltend." Cf. von Loeper's note, Goethes Werke, Vierter Teil, III, Buch der Liebe, pp. 51 f.

L. Anzengruber, Die Kreuzelschreiber III, 3: "da werden s' dir ein Schopf machen wie a Wiedhopf."<sup>1</sup>

## (2) How Did the Hoopoe Obtain Its Crest?<sup>2</sup>

In oriental lore the hoopoe has obtained its crest generally from no less a person than King Solomon. The bird is given its feathery crown in return (a) for having sheltered the great Hebrew King from the sun; (b) for services rendered Solomon in connection with his affair with the Queen of Sheba; and (c), in at least one instance, for having exhibited a peculiar kind of wisdom, one that could be appreciated best of all men by the son of David, of whom it is written (I Kings 11: 1-3) that he loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites, so that he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines--the hoopoe's wisdom consisting in its refusal to pay homage to women. In occidental lore it is (d) by stealing or by borrowing that the hoopoe obtains its crest.

<sup>1</sup>The hoopoe occurs as a crested bird in J. V. Grohmann, Sagen aus Böhmen, I. Teil, Sagen-Buch von Böhmen und Mähren (Prague, 1863), p. 245; "Aberglauben und Gebräuche aus Böhmen," no. 471; O. Dähnhardt, Natursagen III, 1, pp. 139, 406 (Rumanian; the same in Marianu, Ornithologia II, 168 f. = Revue des trad. pop., IX (1894), 627; M. Gaster, Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories (London, 1915), no. LXXVI, pp. 229 f.; Dähnhardt I, 326 f. = E. Rolland, Faune populaire de la France, II (Paris, 1877), 103 (modern oriental); M. Gaster, p. 230 (modern Palestine); R. Wossidlo, Mecklenburgische Volksüberlieferungen, II, 1 (Wismar, 1899), 133 f., no. 987 a, e, f; note on pp. 391 f.

<sup>2</sup>Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk-Literature ("Indiana University Studies," nos. 96-97), no. A 2321.2.

(a) The hoopoe shelters Solomon.--The king of the hoopoes asks of Solomon a reward for having shielded the king from the rays of the sun. Solomon grants the request by bestowing golden crowns upon all hoopoes. This arouses the jealousy of the other birds, causing them to persecute the hoopoes. They complain to Solomon, and he, in turn, changes the golden crowns into feather crests.<sup>1</sup>

In eastern lore the hoopoe stands in a particularly close relation to Solomon. It has guided Solomon through the desert, has been an intimate companion of the king, and for this reason may be assumed to know about royalty. And it is on this last account that the other birds turn to the hoopoe for advice when they gather to elect a king.<sup>2</sup> But the hoopoe is by no means the only bird associated with Solomon. Birds in general, eagles, and especially crested birds are mentioned frequently in connection with him who "spake also of fowl" (I Kings 4: 33). Birds in general are mentioned as shading or canoping the famed throne of Solomon<sup>3</sup> and as forming the canopy over the carpet which was used by Solomon when travelling through the air.<sup>4</sup> According to Otto Keller, the origin of the tradition of a bird canopy over Solomon is to be found in the fact that there were four gilded wry-necks (Wendehälse) in the great hall where Babylonian kings pronounced

<sup>1</sup>Rolland, Faune pop. II, 103 (with additional references); Dähnhardt, I, 325 ff. (with a reference to Indian Antiquary 2, 229. This legend has been brought to Spain by the Moors); III, I, p. 18; Wood, Nat. Hist., II, 200; Seymour, Tales of King Solomon (London, 1924), pp. 98-99. On Indian versions of the hoopoe sheltering Solomon cf. Thompson, Glossary, p. 56 (with add. refs.).

<sup>2</sup>Faridu'd-din Attar, Mantiket-Tair ("Vogelgespräche"), ca. 1200 A.D., see New International Encyclopedia<sup>2</sup>, VIII, 372.

<sup>3</sup>Grünbaum, "Beiträge z. vergl. Mythologie aus der Hageda," Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 304. He quotes (p. 303) from William Ouseley, Oriental Collections, I, 235, a description of the throne of Solomon, taken from a Persian MS; this description is similar to the one given of Solomon's throne in the second Targum on Esther (ad Esther, 1:2); all three descriptions mention the bird canopy. See also Seymour, pp. 37 and 80; G. Salzberger, Die Salomo-Sage in der semitischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Sagenkunde (Berlin-Nikolassee, 1907), pp. 85 f.

<sup>4</sup>S. Singer, "Salomosagen in Deutschland," Z.f.dt.Altertum, XXXV (= N.F. XXIII, 1891), 184, quoting from Gustav Weil, Biblische Legenden der Muselmänner, Frankfurt a.M., 1845; The Koran, trans. G. Sale, pp. 513 f.; E. W. Lane, The Thousand and One Nights... (New York), II, pp. 583 f., note 115. Cf. Thompson, Motif-Index, no. D 1520.19 and D1520.20.



judgment.<sup>1</sup> One or several eagles are said to have been summoned by Solomon to shield the corpse of his father David from the sun.<sup>2</sup>

(b) The hoopoe obtains its crest for services rendered King Solomon on connection with his affair with the Queen of Sheba.—According to Arab historians, Solomon, while on a pilgrimage, in the vicinity of Mecca, discovers the lapwing ("hoopoe") gone from its customary place in the bird-canopy.<sup>3</sup> He becomes angry because he needs water for an ablution which now he must forego, at least for the time being, because only the hoopoe can find water for him.<sup>4</sup> We are told that the truant bird has found a fellow hoopoe which had just then returned from a strange country. The two decide to fly to this country. When they return, they report to Solomon that they have visited a new country, Saba, which is ruled by a queen who owns a magnificent throne. The queen and her subjects are idolaters. To test the veracity of the hoopoe, which might have faked a report in order to appease the anger of the king, Solomon sends it to the queen of Sheba (Saba) with a letter the answer to which is to be brought to him by the winged messenger who thereby becomes a postillon d'amour.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Otto Keller, Die antike Tierwelt II, 54. Cf. the account in Pseudocallisthenes, III, 28, of the eagle (alive or artificial?) hovering over the bar in the palace of Xerxes (S. Singer, p. 185); W. Wackernagel, Kleinere Schriften, III (Leipzig, 1874), 202-203.

<sup>2</sup> Midrash Ruth, 1:17, quoted by Grünbaum, p. 213; S. Singer, p. 186; Salzberger, p. 69.

On crested birds (hoopoe, cock, pewit) in the company of Solomon cf. Weil, Biblische Legenden, p. 228 (hoopoe and cock) and E. Ingersoll, Birds in Legend, Fable, and Folklore (1923), p. 260.

On birds forming a canopy over persons other than Solomon, especially in medieval European literature, cf. Münchener Oswald, ed. G. Baesecke (1907), pp. 233, 403 (ref. to lines 789-798), 433 (to p. 233); Wiener Oswald, ed. Baesecke (1912), pp. lxxxvi f. and 14 (lines 346 ff.); S. Singer, pp. 184 f.; F. Vogt, Geschichte der mittelhochdeutschen Literatur, I<sup>2</sup> (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922), pp. 175 f.

<sup>3</sup> Salzberger, pp. 85 ff.

<sup>4</sup> On the hoopoe as water-finder cf. below, chap. ii: The Hoopoe, the "Doctor."

<sup>5</sup> On birds as messengers cf. L. Uhland, Schriften, III, 109 ff., 171; E. Cosquin, Contes populaires de Lorraine, I (Paris, 1887), 48; Z.f.d.A., XXXV (= N.F. XXIII, 1891), 187; A.f.d.A., XVII (1891), 123; Münchener Oswald, ed. Baesecke, pp. 292 ff., 381 f.; W. Wackernagel, Kleinere Schriften, III (Leipzig, 1874),

As a reward for having brought the king and the queen together a "crown" is given the hoopoe by the king.<sup>1</sup>

(c) The hoopoe obtains its crest from Solomon for refusing to pay homage to women.--This tradition may well date back to pre-Mohammedan times.<sup>2</sup> For the hoopoe was known to Greeks (and Romans) as a misogynist. Aelian (fl. ca. 150 A.D.)--his information is usually derived from older sources, hence may be considerably older than 150 A.D.--calls the hoopoes "ὀργυίθων ἀτηνέτατοι" ("the most unfriendly of birds"), and ascribes to them "μῖσος τοῦ γένους τοῦ τῶν γυναικῶν" ("hatred of womankind").<sup>3</sup>

(d) The provenience of the hoopoe's crest by means of stealing.--In occidental lore, it is by stealing (borrowing and stealing) that the hoopoe obtains its crest.<sup>4</sup>

According to a Mecklenburgian version, the crest was originally the property of the turtle who, at one time, was a king with crown and armor. The crown was stolen from the turtle

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pp. 192 f., 225, note 1; F. Panzer, Hilde-Gudrun (Halle, 1901), pp. 377 ff., 381; H. Haupt, "F. A. Reuss' Sammlung zur fränkischen Volkskunde," Z.d.Ver.f.Volksk., V (1895), 414 f.; von Glasenapp-Rosen et al., Indische Literaturen, p. 164; Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge, p. 232; Bolte-Polívka, IV, 375 (contains refs.); Thompson, Motif-Index, I, no. B 291.1; 291.1.1; 291.1.2 (animal as messenger: ibid., no. B 291; 291.0.1. Crow as messenger of sadness in "Le Testament d'un Amoureux qui mourut par amours, Ensemble son Epitaphe" (printed ca. 1520), in Montaignon, IV, 193 (quoted by E. C. Perrow, "The Last Will and Testament as a Form of Literature," Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Art, and Letters, XVII 1914, 722); raven as messenger of misfortune in Rückert's Werke, ed. by Elsa Hertzner ("Goldene Klassikerbibliothek"), V, 81, n. 13.

<sup>1</sup>Koran, trans. G. Sale, Sura XXVII, with note by F. M. Cooper; Bolte-Polívka, IV, 374 f.; Second Targum on Esther (1:3), quoted with additional references by Dähnhardt, I, 322 ff.; Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge, pp. 211 ff., 232; Seymour, pp. 137-160 (sometimes other birds are mentioned: wild cock, wood-grouse ["Auerhahn"]). But the hoopoe is really the bird in question, cf. Grünbaum, Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 207 ff.; Weil, p. 247; E. Rolland, II, 106; Dawson, p. 33; S. Singer, Z.f.dt.A., XXXV (= N.F. XXIII, 1891), 177; Mocadessi, quoted by Dähnhardt, I, 325 [contains add. refs.]: "von seinen Ehrenkleidern wurde mir eine Krone gewährt, die ich bis dahin entbehrt."

<sup>2</sup>Hanauer, Folklore of the Holy Land, pp. 254 ff., quoted in M. Gaster, Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories (London, 1915), p. 230.

<sup>3</sup>Aeliani, de natura animalium libri XVII, ed. F. Jacobs (Jena, 1832), chap. III, 26 (= p. 63).

<sup>4</sup>Thompson, Motif-Index, I, nos. A 2241 and 2242.



and is now worn by the hoopoe. In order to let everybody know that there is a crown upon its head, it cries continually "up, up, up."<sup>1</sup>

In Bohemia and Rumania, it is the cuckoo who originally owns the crest. The hoopoe borrows it from the cuckoo because, having been invited to a bird wedding (Rumania: the lark's wedding), it wishes to appear at its best. Upon finding that the crest enhances its prestige, the hoopoe decides to keep it. Subsequently, in the Rumanian version, the cuckoo attempts to repossess itself of the crest. A bird assembly is called, the lark presiding, to hear the case. In the end, the hoopoe is permitted to retain the crest. Since then there is no friendship between the cuckoo and the lark. In the Bohemian version there is no attempt on the part of the cuckoo to regain the crest through legal steps. It is content to shout "Kluku, Kluku" (= knave) at the hoopoe, the beatus possidens answering "Jdu, jdu, jdu" (= I am coming).<sup>2</sup>

#### Various Etymologies

The Arabic name of the hoopoe is "hudhud." This is evidently like the English "hoopoe" and perhaps like the German "Wiedehopf" (cf. Suolahti), an attempt to imitate and to interpret the call of this bird, hence an onomatopœic name (cf. the beginning of Chapter V, pp. 40 f.). The Greek *ἑτοψ* and the Latin "upupa," as well as the name of the hoopoe in some other languages, may ultimately go back to its Egyptian-Koptic form.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, as the crested bird that the hoopoe plays its role in Mohammedan-Arabic lore. As the crested bird it is known to the French and the Sicilians: "huppe" and "cristella." There seems to be doubt whether, in French, the "huppe" (= hoopoe) derives its name from the word "huppe" (= crest) or whether "huppe" (= crest) derives its meaning from "huppe" (= hoopoe).<sup>1</sup> The German "Wiedehopf"

<sup>1</sup>R. Wossidlo, Mecklenburgische Volksüberlieferungen, II, 1 (Wismar, 1899), 363, no. 289.

<sup>2</sup>J. V. Grohmann, Sagen aus Böhmen, p. 245 (quoted from Krolmus, I, 501); Wossidlo, see note 1 above; Revue des trad. pop., IX (1894), 626 f.; Dähnhardt, II, 1, pp. 139, 406; Marianu, Ornithologia, II, 168; M. Gaster, pp. 229 f., no. lxxvi. On the widespread tradition which links the hoopoe with the cuckoo, cf. below: The Hoopoe, the Cuckoo's sexton (Kuckucksküster).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. J. H. Bondi, "Etymologisches," Z.d.dt.morgenl. Ges., L (1896), 292.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. "alouette huppé" (= "Haubenlerche," "crested lark," "alauda cristata"), so, with a question mark in F. Diez, Etymo-

has been explained as containing in its second part a variant of "Haube" (= cap, hood).<sup>1</sup> In Arabic, the crest is sometimes likened to a burnoose. For this reason pious Moslems say that the hoopoe stands, a burnoose drawn over its head, bent forward as if ready to kneel down for prayer.<sup>2</sup> It is a strange coincidence that J. W. Wolf, Beiträge zur Mythologie, II, 431, lists as a cry of the German "Wiedehopf": "Böck de Röck!" (= "Bück den Rücken," "bow down before God").<sup>3</sup>

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logisches Wörterbuch der romanischen Sprachen, s.v. "upupa"; for French "huppe" (= crest), derived from the word "huppe" (= hoopoe), cf. Bondi, p. 293; Rolland, Faune populaire de la France, II (Paris, 1877), 100 f.; W. Gottschalk, Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der französischen Sprache, I (Heidelberg, 1930), 88. Compare with French "huppe" and its twofold meaning ("crest" and "hoopoe") the Wendish "upac," which means "hoopoe" and "Brauthaube" (ceremonial cap worn by the bride); cf. W. von Schulenburg, Wendische Volkssagen und Gebräuche aus dem Spreewald (Leipzig, 1880), 262, and the French expressions "rabattre la huppe à qqn." = "jemand kappen, demütigen" (humiliate); "les plus huppés y sont pris" = "Die Klügsten laufen dabei an, fallen hinein" (the most clever are taken in); "huppé" = "gut gekleidet, vornehm, wohlhabend" (well-dressed, high-class, wealthy). See also Du Cange, Glossarium med. et inf. lat., III (1844), 732, s.v. "hupupatus."

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Grünbaum, Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 207.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Grünbaum, ibid., 314; also Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sagenkunde (Leiden, 1893), p. 233.

<sup>3</sup>A similar cry (at least for the day) is attributed to the "Wachtel" (partridge): "Bück denn Rüg, bück denn Rüg!" Cf. J. F. Danneil, Wörterbuch der altmärkisch-plattdeutschen Mundart (Salzwedel, 1859), 242. For additional discussion of etymologies of upupa, epops, Wiedehopf, hoopoe, huppe, cf. Thompson, Glossary, pp. 54-57 (onomatopoeic, probably based on Egyptian solar name; cry imitated in Aristophanes, Aves 277); E. W. Martin, The Birds of the Latin Poets (Stanford, 1914), p. 95 (cites the familiar pun: upupa = hoopoe, upupa = pick, mattock, Plautus, Captivi, v. 1004, Act V, sc. iv, l. 7: "Item cui haec advenienti upupa, qui me delectem data est."); H. Kirke Swann, A Dictionary of English and Folk-Names of British Birds (London, 1913), p. 125 (early occurrences and spellings of the name of the hoopoe). E. Rolland, Faune populaire, II, 99 ff.; Hatzfeld-Darmesteter-Thomas, Dictionnaire général de la langue française, II (Paris, 1920), s.v. huppe and houppe. Compare: houppe, Riquet à la Houppe, cf. Bescherelle, Dictionnaire National, II, s.v. houppe, and C. W. von Sydow, Ein Märchen von Ferrault (= Riquet à la houppe) und dessen Urform ("Völkscundliche Untersuchungen... Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer dargebracht," Basel-Strassburg, 1916 Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde, XX), 441 ff.; K. G. Andresen, Über deutsche Volksetymologie (Heilbronn, 1889), p. 249; Suolahti, p. 13; W. Oppermann, Aus dem Leben unserer Muttersprache. Eine Einführung, Leipzig, 1922, reviewed by R. Riegler in Literaturblatt f. germ. u. rom. Philol., XLVII (1926), cols. 2-3.

CHAPTER II  
THE HOPOE, "THE DOCTOR"

(Folk-Medicine, Magical and Similar Practices and Beliefs)

The name "doctor" was given the hoopoe by the Arabs because, in their belief, this bird possesses marvelous medicinal qualities.<sup>1</sup> As a therapeutical fowl the hoopoe occurs in Egyptian (Demotic), Coptic, Graeco-Egyptian medical prescriptions, in Pliny (Hist. Nat., 30, 7: good for stitch in side), in the "Syriac Book of Medicine," in the writings of the Arabic physician and botanist Ibn al-Beithar (d. 1248 A.D.). As late as 1752, the date of the appearance of the second edition of the Pharmacopoeia Universalis or the New Universal English Dispensatory,<sup>2</sup> by R. James (London), the medicinal virtues of the hoopoe are accepted in Western Europe, and even today the nomads of the Sahara believe in the bird's sanatory powers.

Closely related to the belief in the specific medicinal qualities of the hoopoe is the conviction found in antiquity and still current, that the whole<sup>3</sup> or certain parts of the hoopoe possess magical powers. These parts are the heart, the blood, the eye, the head, the tongue, the wings, and the feathers. Magical powers are also claimed for the eggs of the hoopoe and for the fabled stone, lapis quirinus, found in the hoopoe's nest.

Of the heart of the hoopoe it is said that it is used by magicians and by people who perform evil deeds secretly.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the hoopoe is recommended as a protection against

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<sup>1</sup>E. Ingersoll, Birds in Legend, Fable and Folklore (1923), p. 153, quoting Cyrus Adler, at one time Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Charles Swainson, Provincial Names and Folklore of the British Birds (London, 1885), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>P. 360. See Dawson, pp. 32-36, 38; Ingersoll, p. 260.

<sup>3</sup>E.g., pulverized ashes of the hoopoe, mixed with the food of a bird, prevent this bird from flying away. Cf. M. R. Buck, Medicinischer Volksglauben u.(!) Volksaberglauben aus Schwaben (Ravensburg, 1865), p. 52.

<sup>4</sup>Konrad von Megenberg, Buch der Natur, ed. Pfeiffer, p. 228, 24 (heart and blood).

witchcraft.<sup>1</sup> Hans Vintler in Pluemen der tugent informs us that the hoopoe's heart, placed upon a sleeper at night, will cause him to reveal hidden things.<sup>2</sup> According to a MS from Stendal, the hoopoe's or the treefrog's heart, if carried on one's person, will cause everybody to love one.<sup>3</sup> The same MS advises drying and pulverizing the heart of the hoopoe and placing it under one's head at night, in order to dream about the location of hidden treasure.<sup>4</sup> Johannes Ravisius Textor mentions the heart of the hoopoe as good for stitches in the side.<sup>5</sup>

In Haggadic writings, the blood of the hoopoe is mentioned as a curative.<sup>6</sup> Medieval bestiaries warn against anointing oneself with the hoopoe's blood, when falling asleep, because then one will dream of being suffocated by demons.<sup>7</sup> This belief was

<sup>1</sup>Adolf Wuttke and E. H. Meyer, Der deutsche Volksaberglaube der Gegenwart (4th ed., Leipzig, 1925), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Ed. by Ignaz von Zingerle, Innsbruck, 1874 (= "Ältere Tirolische Dichter," I), p. 263, 7841-43. Cf. Ingersoll, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup>Kuhn-Schwartz, Norddeutsche Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche (Leipzig, 1848), p. 461, no. 457; cf. Rabelais, Gargantua und Pantagruel (ed. G. Regis, Leipzig, 1832), I, p. 443, and II, I, p. 418, where hoopoe and treefrog occur together as in Kuhn-Schwartz, cf. Busch, Deutscher Volksaberglaube, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup>Kuhn-Schwartz, p. 461.

<sup>5</sup>Theatrum Poeticum, p. 999: "cor eius (upupae) laudatur in lateris doloribus." In this he seems to go back to Pliny.

<sup>6</sup>Grünbaum, Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 211 f.

<sup>7</sup>Dawson, p. 37; Philippe de Thaon, Bestiaire, in Ch.-V. Langlois, La vie en France au moyen âge du XII<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle. La connaissance de la nature et du monde d'après des écrits français à l'usage des laïcs (Paris, 1927), p. 25: "La huppe...qui s'oindroit de son sang avant de dormir rêverait que le Diable vient l'étrangler." Cf. F. Lauchert, Geschichte des Physiologus (Strassburg, 1899), p. 135. MSS Sloane 3544, Harl. 4751, and 12 F, XIII (in the British Museum); MS 3516 = Picardy Bestiary, Arsenal Library, Paris. These MSS are cited in G. C. Druce, "The mediæval bestiaries, and their influence on ecclesiastical decorative art," The Journal of the British Archaeological Association, N.S. XXV (1919), 41-82; this particular reference is on p. 43, note 1. Concerning the blood of the female hoopoe we learn from Albertus Magnus, de virtutibus herbarum, that it, mixed with the centaureia (a plant) and added to the oil of a burning lamp, brings about strange hallucinations with the bystanders, etc.; cf. L. A. J. W. Sloet, De dieren in het germaansche volksgeloof en volksgebruik ('s-Gravenhage, 1887), pp. 238 f.

already recorded in the early years of the seventh century of our era by Isidore of Seville: "Upupa...Cuius sanguine quisquis se inunxerit, dormitum pergens daemones sufficantes se videbit."<sup>1</sup> Approximately seven centuries later the same superstition is listed in Codices membranacei Augienses LXXXVIII-XC (Karlsruhe): "tempora hominis inuncta sanguine upupe quando dormiendum est facerunt terribilia sompnia uideri."<sup>2</sup> It is, however, not only "terrible dreams" that this blood produces. Hoopoe blood can bring about pleasant dreams if only one ties a piece of cloth, impregnated with the hoopoe's blood, upon one's wrist.<sup>3</sup> The wearing of a wig made of the hair of a hanged man, and moistened with the blood of the hoopoe, renders one invisible.<sup>4</sup> That the hoopoe's blood, properly applied, can inspire love of a man in a woman, is convincingly set forth in a fifteenth century advertisement: "Item wer sinen buch salbet mit widhopen bluot, und welche frau er niemet, die wirt im holt."<sup>5</sup>

The eyes of the hoopoe are a counter-charm against all kinds of witchery, if they are used with feathers that accumulate in the gizzards of owls, together with a small splinter of wood. In order to be effective these three ingredients must be blended in the last night of the year.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Isidore (d. 636 A.D.), Etymologiarum Lib. XII; vii, 66, quoted in Nicolai Pergameni Dialogus Creaturarum, ed. J. G. Th. Grässe, Die beiden ältesten lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.," CXLVIII [1880]), pp. 201-203. Cf. Acerba III, 16: "Del sangue de la upupa chi s' ogne, / Da spiriti, dormendo, vederassi / Essere preso, che non par che sogne," quoted in Brunetto Latini, I Libri Naturali del Tesoro, ed. G. Battelli (1917), 126.

<sup>2</sup>Zeitschr. f. dt. Wortforschung, V (1903-04), 19.

<sup>3</sup>Johann Nepomuk, Ritter von Alpenburg, Mythen und Sagen Tirols (Zürich, 1857), p. 386; Z.d.Ver.f.Volkskunde, VIII (1898), 169.

<sup>4</sup>E. Rolland, II, 103.

<sup>5</sup>Cod. phys. 4, no. 29, Stuttgart, quoted by Pfeiffer in Anz. für Kunde d. dt. Vorzeit, N.F. I (1853-54), 191.

<sup>6</sup>Z.d.Ver.f.Vkunde, VIII (1898), 168; mentioned as having been carried about in a little sack by old hunters as a talisman against the devil, evil spirits, "Truden," witches, and sorcerers, and as a powerful defense against all manner of black art by Johann Nepomuk, Ritter von Alpenburg, pp. 386 f.



The eyes of the hoopoe can furthermore make one who carries them on his person, universally beloved, acceptable and clever.<sup>1</sup> They inspire gratitude. They change enemies into friends.<sup>2</sup> If carried in a bag they help one to buy profitably.<sup>3</sup> They assist one in becoming acquitted in court, if worn on one's chest in the presence of the judge. At least they put him in a favorable state of mind.<sup>4</sup>

No merchant can ever deceive you if you carry along in a sack the head of a hoopoe.<sup>5</sup> The tongue of the hoopoe helps in curing forgetfulness.<sup>6</sup>

Accuracy of aim in shooting is guaranteed through the possession of a charm, composed of the hearts of three young swallows and the right wing of a hoopoe.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A. Birlinger, Aus Schwaben, I (1874), p. 416; Johann Nepomuk, pp. 386 f.; Kuhn-Schwartz, p. 461; P. Hirzel, Schweizerisches Archiv. f. Volkskunde, II (1898), 268; Z.d.Ver.f.Vkunde, VIII (1898), 169.

<sup>2</sup>"Si oculi upupe gestentur ab aliquo reddū hominem gratio-  
sum, hoc dicit Albertus. Si gestentur coram pectore faciunt  
hominem amicum omnibus inimicis suis." From Codices membranacei  
Augienses LXXXVIII-XC (Karlsruhe, 13th-14th cent.), in Z.f.dt.  
Wortforschung, V (1903-04), 19; P. Hirzel, as in note 1 above.

<sup>3</sup>See Hirzel, as in note 1 above.

<sup>4</sup>Kuhn-Schwartz ("gerechtfertigt"); Johann Nepomuk (günstig); L. A. J. W. Sloet, p. 238.

<sup>5</sup>Codices membranacei Augienses LXXXVIII-XC, in Z.f.dt.  
Wortforschung, V (1903-04), 19: "si capud eius (i.e. "upupae") in  
bursa tecum habueris numquam ab aliquo mercatore decipieris."  
The same superstition is cited in Kuhn-Schwartz ("in bursa" =  
"in einem Säcklein"); it is cited also, without mentioning mer-  
chants, by Hovorka-Kronfeld, Vergleichende Volksmedizin, I (Stutt-  
gart, 1908), p. 451, II, p. 231; refs. found in F. Byloff, Volks-  
kundliches aus Strafprozessen der österr. Alpenländer ("Quellen  
zur deutschen Volkskunde," III [1929]), p. 51, n. 3, and in F.  
Byloff, Hexenglaube und Hexenverfolgung in den österr. Alpen-  
ländern ("Quellen z. dt. Volkskunde," VI [1934], p. 129: a  
"Wiedehopfköpflein" (small head of hoopoe or head of small hoopoe)  
is involved (last quarter of 17th cent.); cf. Johann Nepomuk, who  
does not mention merchants, but specifies the whole head of the  
hoopoe; L. A. J. W. Sloet, p. 238.

<sup>6</sup>"The lapwing's (= hoopoe's) tongue, if hung over a man  
who suffers from forgetfulness, helps him," Hortus sanitatis  
(1490 A.D.), III, 118 (ref. found in Dawson, p. 37). The hoopoe's  
tongue is mentioned in general as a charm in Rabelais, Gargantua  
und Pantagruel, ed. cit., I, p. 443 and II, 1, p. 418.

<sup>7</sup>M. Kronfeld, Der Krieg im Aberglauben und Volksglauben  
(Munich, 1915), 112 (=John, Westböhmen, p. 328).

The feathers of the hoopoe are one of eight charms that protect against vermin or increase the sale of bread.<sup>1</sup> When placed upon the head they relieve headache.<sup>2</sup>

The eggs of the hoopoe are said to be of interest to witches, who use them "for sorcery."<sup>3</sup>

A stone found in the hoopoe's nest, when placed under the head or upon the chest, causes one to reveal secrets while asleep, and increases phantasies. The name of this stone is quirin(us), quiritia, cinreis, withopfenstein. It is used by the witches.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>F. Byloff, Volkskundliches, p. 51 (citing from the archives of the Austrian city of Freistadt, A.D. 1728). See also the following footnote.

<sup>2</sup>"Wydhopffen. Seine fäderen auff das haupt gelegt/ stillend das hauptwee. Ob denen fäderen geröuckt/ treybt die würm ausz," in C. Gesner, Tierbuch (1551-), trans. C. Forer, I (Zürich, 1563), fol. CCLX, cited in J. Jühling, Die Tiere in der deutschen Volksmedizin alter und neuer Zeit (Mittweida, 1900?), p. 246: Adem Lonicerus, fol. 40b, quoted by K. Schiller, Zum Thier- und Kräuterbuch des mecklenburgischen Volkes, II (Schwerin, 1861), 13.

<sup>3</sup>Johann Fischart, Geschichtsklitterung, in J. Scheible, Das Kloster, VIII (1847), 363.

<sup>4</sup>O. Schade, Altdeutsches Wörterbuch<sup>2</sup>, II (1882), pp. 1409, 1440 (with add. refs.); L. A. J. W. Sloet, p. 238: "vermengt hij wat afschrapsel er van met het sap van het Kattenkruit--nepeta Cataria L.--en bestrijkt hij daar een dier mede, dan zal het drachtig worden en een zwart jong werpen." On stones with magical powers having a more or less intimate connection with birds, cf. Ingersoll, pp. 95-97 (alectorius: cock; raven; zahir mora: adjutant stork; swallow; aestites: eagle); F. Liebrecht, Zur Volkskunde (1879), p. 347 (Markolf = Heher); Clemens Brentano, Gesammelte Schriften, ed. Chr. Brentano, IV (Frankfurt a.M., 1852), 437 (raven); in his Das Märchen von Gockel und Hinkel, Brentano makes use of the belief in the "Hahnenstein"; Meigenberg, Buch der Natur, ed. Pfeiffer, pp. 166 f. (eagle), p. 190 (griffin); Z.d. Ver.f.Vkunde, VIII (1898), 169 ff. (Blendstein: Zeisig = Siskin; Schwalbenstein: swallow, raven, capon). Goldstaub-Wendriner, Ein Tosco-Venezianischer Bestiarius (Halle, 1892), pp. 113, note; 132, note; 373, note 5; Max Wellmann, p. 5 (Alphos aetites: eagle) with refs. in note 21; 88ff.; 92 (adder, swallow, lizard, hawk, hyena); 103 f.; J. S. V. Popowitsch, Versuch einer Vereinigung der Mundarten von Teutschland zu einem vollständigen Teutschen Wörterbuche (Vienna, 1780), 250 (Adlerstein, s.v. Klapperstein); Grimmelshausen, Simplicius Simplicissimus, in "Deutsche National-Litteratur," XXXIII, 134 (Adlerstein); Schwenckfeld, Theriotropheum (Adlerstein, Hahnenstein, Schwalbenstein, also toadstone and stone found in the head of the carp), cited in Mitt. d. schles. Ges. f. Vkunde, XXIX (1928), 293 f.; see also X, Heft XIX (1908), 83 f. (Finkenstein), 92 (Schwalbenstein); K. F. Renner, Hennynk de Han (Bremen, 1731-32), ed. Nicolaus Meyer (Bremen, 1814), p. 34 (Hahnenstein); J. Jühling, pp. 233, 235 f., 297 (Schwalbenstein);

Passing on to superstitions that have to do with the cry or the song of the hoopoe, we find that it predicts fair weather, if it ("Huppuppup") is heard frequently in spring.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, its hoarse cry is believed to foretell rain.<sup>2</sup> The same cry ("Hop Hop") prophesies war.<sup>3</sup> It mourns the dead.<sup>4</sup> Again, "if the lapwing (hoopoe) do sing before the vines bud, it foreshadows great plenty of wine."<sup>5</sup> Again, if upon hearing the hoopoe's call for the first time, presumably in the spring of the year, one

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Jühling's earliest ref., on p. 297, is to the Dresden MS C 328, 16th [?] cent.); S. Seligmann, Die magischen Heil- und Schutzmittel aus der unbelebten Natur mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mittel gegen den bösen Blick. Eine Geschichte des Amuletzwesens (Stuttgart, 1927), pp. 208 ff.; esp. pp. 215-17 (Aetites = Adlerstein); 219 (Fledermausstein, Geierstein, Haher- = Gratschstein); 219-20 (Alectorius = Hahnenstein); 220-21 (Hühnerstein); 223 (Rabenstein); 228-29 (Schwalbenstein); 229 (Trappenstein, Zeisigstein); L. A. J. W. Sloet, pp. 188 f. (Adlerstein, Klapperstein); 206 f. (Schwalbenstein); 251 (Hahnenstein, Schlangenstein, paddensteen); Joachim Camerarius, Symbolorum et Emblematum ex volatilibus et insectis desumptorum centuria tertia collecta (Nuremberg, 1596), no. VII (the illustration shows an eagle in the nest, holding a stone in its claws; the text explains: "...hunc (lapidem) Aetiten esse putant"; the text contains many refs. to older and to more recent writers who mention the aetites).

<sup>1</sup>K. Schiller, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Gubernatis, II, 230, in Swainson, pp. 107 f.

<sup>3</sup>C. Ph. Funke, Naturgeschichte u. Technologie für Lehrer<sup>6</sup> (ed. C. R. W. Wiedemann, Braunschweig, 1812), pp. 380 f.; cf. Swainson, where he gives the Swedish name of the hoopoe: "Här Fogel" (= army bird), its cry indicating that war and scarcity of food are impending. Compare, however, M. Heyne in Dt. Wörterbuch, IV, 761.

<sup>4</sup>"Der withopfe hat die nature, daz er ubir diu grebir vligit und die töten claget," W. Wackernagel, Altdeutsche Predigten und Gebete, 56, 135. Cf. Hrabanus Mautus, op. II, de Universo Lib. VIII = Migne, Patrologia Latina, CXI, col. 254: "upupa lugubre animal, amansque luctum est."

<sup>5</sup>Lupton, A Thousand Notable Things (London, 1627; 1st ed., 1595), Book IX, chap. 21, quoted in Dawson, p. 37; cf. Swainson, pp. 107 f., quoting Gubernatis II, 230. This belief, apparently, is the same as the one recorded by Horapollo in the 4th or 5th cent. A.D.: a good vintage is foretold if the cry of the hoopoe is heard often before the time of the vines ("si ante tempus vitium saepe cecinerit"). Horapollinis Niloi Hieroglyphica, ed. Conradus Leemans (Amsterdam, 1835), Book II, chaps. 92 f. The same author reports (ibid.): "upupa significat hominem cui uva nocuit." Cf. Thompson, Glossary, p. 56, where the same ability to "foreshadow great plenty of wine" is claimed for the cuckoo (Pliny, Hist. Nat., XVIII, 249; Horace, Sat., I, 7,30). See also Max Wellmann, p. 72.



rolls around on the ground, one will not suffer from lumbago.<sup>1</sup>

There remain to be catalogued the following practices and beliefs concerning the hoopoe: the hoopoe is a waterfinder, an "opener," and it has the faculty of speech. This bit of hoopoe-lore, chiefly magical in character, is found especially in oriental-semitic tradition. It serves to strengthen the hoopoe's claim to the title of "doctor."

The hoopoe is a waterfinder. It can see through the earth and can point out hidden springs, a virtue which endeared it to Solomon and, naturally, one that is appreciated by such as dwell in the desert.<sup>2</sup>

There are several birds who enjoy the reputation of being "openers," i.e. of having the power to "open" a passage, to cut or break through obstacles. This power is, usually, inherent in some magical object (stone, herb, root, worm, etc.) which the bird owns or which is accessible to it. Such "opener" birds are the raven, the eagle, the mountain cock (Auerhahn), the wood-pecker, the bee-eater, the magpie, and the ostrich. Easily the most important one is the hoopoe. The hoopoe possesses the famous shamir, one of the ten marvels that were created on the twilight of the earth's first sabbath-day. This shamir, an exceedingly small worm, in size not larger than a grain of barley, was used by Moses to engrave the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on the breastplate of the High Priest. Later it was employed by Solomon, who had obtained it through cunning, to assist in the erection of the temple. The great king went to the stone-quarries, drew the outlines of every stone that would be needed in the building of the sanctuary, and placed the worm on these outlines. As the shamir-worm crawled along, the stones split asunder without noise, "so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building" (I Kings 6: 7).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wilibald von Schulenburg, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup>Koran, Sura XXVII (trans. G. Sale), pp. 301, 513; G. Salzberger, Die Salomossaage in der semitischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Sagenkunde (1907), pp. 76 f., 86; M. Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sagenkunde (1893), pp. 216, 230 f.; G. Weil, Biblische Legenden, p. 228, in Dähnhardt, I (1907), pp. 322 ff.; Swainson, pp. 107 f.; Ingersoll, p. 260.

<sup>3</sup>Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 212 f.: wood-pecker possesses rock-cleaving herb; raven and eagle have the shamir. Salzberger, p. 75: eagle has shamir. Z.f.dt.A., XXXV (N.F.,

In the extra-Solomonic "opener" legend the use to which the hoopoe's "opener" is put is of a much less exalted nature. Ordinarily, the hoopoe employs the shamir, frequently a plant, in order to burst through obstacles separating it from its young. If man, usually through stealth, obtains possession of the magic object he abuses it by gaining through its "opening" power treasure that does not belong to him.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to find

XXIII, 1891), 178: mountain cock. Goldstaub-Wendrin, Ein Tosco-Venezianischer Bestiarius (Halle, 1892), pp. 372 ff.; Max Wellmann, pp. 97 f.; L. A. J. W. Sloet, p. 192; Clemens Brentano, Ges. Schriften, ed. Chr. Brentano (Frankfurt, 1852), VI, 434, n. 39: wood-pecker has the springwort ("Springwurzeln," "shamir"). O. Keller, Tiere des klass. Altertums in kulturgesch. Beziehung (Innsbruck, 1887), pp. 284 f.; idem, Die antike Tierwelt (Leipzig, 1913), II, 52; Preller, Römische Mythologie, p. 332: wood-pecker (with references to frequent confusion of wood-pecker and hoopoe); of Pliny, Hist. Nat., X, 20; XXV, 5. The woodpecker (picus), in turn, is confused with the bee-eater (μέγας, merops apiaster); so in Megenberg, quoted by Baring-Gould, Curious Myths of the Middle Ages (London, 1906), p. 397; Megenberg gives the name of the bird as "Merops which we in German term Bömheckel = Baumhacker." W. Wackernagel, Kleinere Schriften, III (1874), ἐπὶ τῇ τριτοῦντα, p. 190: wood-pecker, woodcock, ostrich have the magic "opening"-herb or worm. J. Scheible, Das Kloster, XII (Stuttgart, 1849), p. 711: wood-pecker, magpie, and hoopoe, with ref. to Albertus Magnus. Reinfrid von Braunschweig, ed. K. Bartsch ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.", CIX [1871]), 20881-20970: ostrich has "opening" herb. Birlinger, Aus Schwaben, I (1874), 397 f.: miraculous root in swallow's nest, may belong here. On birds as "openers" cf. Ingersoll, p. 248 ff. On the shamir (shamur, Schamir, Schamur, Tamir, Thumare, springwort, Springwurzeln, "lightning bird," "opening" stones, worms, herbe) cf. refs. cited and Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. "Shamir"; Z.f.d.A., XXXV, 183; Z.d.d. morgenl. Ges., XXXI, 204-206, 208, 310; Swainson, pp. 107 f. (with ref. to Buxtorf, Lex Talmud., col. 2455); Thompson, Glossary, p. 56; Bolte-Polivka, IV, 123 (ref. to Pliny, Hist. Nat., XXVI, 18: magio herb opens closed doors); Meier, Schwäbische Sagen, no. 265; E. Oder, "Der Wiedehopf in der griech. Sage," Rhein. Museum, XIV (1888), 589, n. 31; Sartori, Sitte und Brauch, II, 21; Seymour, Tales of King Solomon (London, 1924), pp. 114-120 (= chap. iv: The Finding of Shamir); Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge, p. 227; P. Cassel, "Schamir," in Denkschriften der kgl. Akademie d. Wissenschaften in Erfurt, (Erfurt, 1856); Thompson, Motif-Index, II, 233-35, nos. D 1550 - D 1556.

<sup>1</sup>Aelian, De natura animalium, III, 26 (ed. F. Jacobs, p. 63): the hoopoe uses the herb (?) πρόα several times to gain access to its brood. The πρόα is used as an "opener" to appropriate treasures that belong to somebody else (ἵχθητο οὐκ αὐτῷ τὰ δικά αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τῷ ὄρνιθι οὐ τῷ ἰσχυρῷ κούρας ἡγεμενός). In Megenberg's Buch der Natur--see previous footnote--the magic plant used to gain access to the nest "is called herba meropis, or woodpecker plant, and is called in magical books chora"; cf. Dawson, p. 592. The name δοκάντωρ also occurs, e.g. in Horapollo, II, chaps. 92-93. πρόα means grass, herb; δοκάντωρ is adiantum capillus Veneris,

what seems to be the earliest allusion to the hoopoe's possession of the shamir in Aristophanes.<sup>1</sup> And it is just barely possible that there exists a connection between the nesting habits of the hoopoe, as described by Aristotle and Aelian,<sup>2</sup> and the habits of the wood-cock (who has evidently taken the place of the hoopoe as the owner of the shamir),<sup>3</sup> as told to Solomon by Ashmedai:

...the woodcock, having taken an oath to return the worm, bears it to the rocky summits of mountains where neither trees nor grass can grow. He lays the worm upon the rocks and crags and thus splits them; afterward he collects the seeds of trees and plants and drops them on the prepared ground so that the barren mountain tops become covered with verdure. Therefore the woodcock is called "Mountainbreaker."<sup>4</sup>

It is, at least, not inconceivable that the woodcock-hoopoe which spends a large amount of time among the rocky summits of mountains where neither trees nor grass can grow should rear its young in the same neighborhood. If the passage in Aristophanes really contains an allusion to the hoopoe as owner of the shamir, and if the passages in Aristotle and Aelian really link up with the rock-cleaving properties of the hoopoe's shamir, then one may well claim a much more venerable age for the hoopoe-shamir legend than

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an aquatic plant. On ἀδαντον see Max Wellmann, p. 73 (with additional refs.). Could "chora" be the centaurea, especially the centaurea cyanus ("Kornblume," cornflower)? Cf. L. A. J. W. Sloet, p. 236. The adiantum is used by the hoopoe not only for its "opening" powers. According to Horapollo, loc. cit., this plant restores to the hoopoe that has eaten the fruit of the vine its former well-being. And according to Aelian, the adiantum, quod callitrichum (having beautiful hair) quoque vocant, is placed into the nest by the hoopoe in order to ward off fascination. The refs. to Horapollo and Aelian are given in Joachim Camerarius, no. LXXII.

<sup>1</sup>Aves, 93: ἀνολγε τὴν ὄλην; cf. O. Keller, Die antike Tierwelt, II (1913), 589, n. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle, H. A., IX, 49 (ed. Aubert-Wimmer, I, 240; II, 330); Aelian, De natura animalium, III, 26 (ed. F. Jacobs, p. 63): ὑποπλίκειν εἰς καλὴς ἐν ταῖς ἔρημοις καὶ τοῖς πᾶσι τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς (to fasten, construct their nests in deserted places and in towering rocks). This bit of information is still remembered in the times of Justinian: Agathias Scholasticus of Myrina, called "Asianus" (530?-580?), mentions the κρηναὶ ἀλῆς, the rocky abode of the hoopoe in one of his poems; see Anthologia Graeca, ed. Hieronymus de Bosch, III (Utrecht, 1798), Book VII, 65, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Grünbaum, Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 206.

<sup>4</sup>Seymour, p. 117; cf. Grünbaum, Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., p. 212: ("felsenspaltendes Kraut").

seems to be indicated by the fact that it plays a prominent role in haggadic writings.

The hoopoe has the faculty of speech. It is one of the "little birds that told me." In this respect it does not differ from other birds who can talk and are chosen to deliver messages because of their ability to convey intelligence "by word of mouth." In oriental lore, however, the hoopoe does occupy a special niche in the gallery of speaking birds, primarily because of its intimate association with Solomon. The great king of whom it is said that he knew the languages of birds and of animals<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Second Targum on Esther, cf. Seymour, p. 35; Salzberger, pp. 73 ff.; Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 353; Ingersoll, pp. 258 f.; Bolte-Polivka, IV, 322 (Solomon can understand not only why, but also what a bird is twittering). This knowledge of the language of the fowls of the air is considered one of the many indications of the wisdom and the power of the great king in Hebrew (cf. above), in Mohammedan (e.g., Koran, Sura XXVII, 16: we have been taught the speech of birds) and in Ethiopian lore (Salzberger, p. 74, n. 5). This tradition, crediting Solomon with the ability to understand birds and to converse with them (Rückert's well-known "vogelsprachekund wie Salomo," Aus der Jugendzeit, lines 15 f., comes to mind here) seems to rest on the oft-quoted passage I Kings 5: 13 (4: 33 in the English version): "and he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." Most likely the Hebrew preposition: -ל-="of," "concerning," "about," was confused with the other Hebrew preposition: -א-="to," making the text read: "...he spake also to beasts, and to fowl." Cf. Salzberger, pp. 12 (where he claims that this misinterpretation was an intentional one) and 73; Grünbaum, Neue Beiträge, p. 211, n. 1 (quoting Rabbi Tanchum Jeruschalmi as rejecting the haggadic interpretation of -ל as meaning "to"); Nollen, German Poems, 1800-1850, p. 343, n. to 117. According to Gesenius-Bühl, Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das alte Testament (15th ed., 1910), s.v. -ל-, the use of -ל for ל may be due, in part, to inaccurate copying. On the "wisdom" of Solomon see Max Wellmann, pp. 58 ff.

That the wise king's knowledge of the language of animals is able, even in these latter days, to fire a poet's imagination, is shown to be true by the following poem of recent date:

The Boastful Butterfly  
(A Legend of Jerusalem)  
by Arthur Guiterman

King Solomon put crown and scepter by  
To seek the palace garden cool and shady,  
And there he overheard a butterfly  
Magniloquently boasting to his lady.

The little creature bragged, "If I should care  
To stamp my foot with purpose and decision,

was extremely fond of the utterances of the former because of their soft notes, and of the birds with whom he had companionship he esteemed most highly and addressed most frequently the trumpeter cock and the hoopoe, who is able to detect water in the most arid places.<sup>1</sup>

It is apparent from the material collected in this section that the hoopoe, the associate of the wise king Solomon, amply deserves its honorary degree of "Doctor," at least in the opinion of the Hebrew-Mohammedan Orient. In occidental lore, it is true, the hoopoe is the object of a good many folk-medicinal and magical beliefs and practices, as shown above. It seems, however, that the main imprint made by the hoopoe on the medieval and early modern mind of occidental Europe is not due to anything enumerated in this section. Indeed, as I hope to show later, especially in medieval and early modern times, the hoopoe, a "doctor" of saintly odor to the Hebrew-Mohammedan legend, is best known to Europe as a malodorous bird--the one which fouls its own nest.

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These golden domes would melt in empty air,  
This lovely garden vanish like a vision!"

"Ho, Butterfly, come hither!" cried the king.  
The insect trembled on the royal digit.  
"How dared you tell your lady such a thing,"  
The monarch growled, "you lying little midget?"

The tiny culprit hung his humbled head,  
But answered, blushing like a ripe persimmon,  
"Now, King, you know, as eminently wed,  
We have to swagger to impress these women."

"Go, little friend," the laughing king replied.  
"'Tis true, we husbands cannot be quite candid."  
The butterfly rejoined his watchful bride;  
"What did he say to you?" the bride demanded.

"I'll tell you, dearest," said the little scamp,  
"Although 'twas confidential and I shouldn't:  
He begged me, as a favor, not to stamp,  
And so of course I promised that I wouldn't."  
Found in This Week of June 19, 1937.

<sup>1</sup>Seymour, pp. 95 ff. (= chap. v).



CHAPTER III  
THE HOOPOE, AN EXPONENT OF FILIAL PIETY

For centuries the hoopoe has been the symbol of amor parentum in its twofold meaning: it has signified parental devotion to the offspring and filial piety toward the parents. The one or the other phase of this belief in the family spirit of the hoopoe, but especially the latter--love for the aged parents--was prevalent in the valley of the Nile and in the plains of Hindustan; it is part of the lore of Greece and Rome; it occurs in Hebrew-Mohammedan tales of Solomon; it has found expression in the literature and in the ecclesiastical art of Byzantium and of Western Europe in the Middle Ages. In fact, it was only when the copying and the illuminating of the Bestiaries had come to an end, and when Renaissance and Reformation had done away with many an old tradition of church decoration, that the preacher no longer invoked the hoopoe to bring home to his parishioners the lesson contained in the passages: "To requite their parents, for that is good and acceptable before God" (I Tim. 5: 14); "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Prov. 23: 22); "Honour thy father and thy mother (Ex. 20: 12); "He that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death. He that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21: 15, 17); and that first "glance" in the vision of Isaiah: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me" (Is. 1: 2).<sup>1</sup> Before the

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., Göttheim MS (11th cent.) of the Physiologus: "de upupa. Scriptum quippe est in lege. honora patrem tuum et matrem et reliqua. Physiologus dicit. est avis que dicitur vpupa. cuius filii cum viderint quod parentes eorum senuerint et pre caligine cernere non potuerint diligent oculos parentum, ac foveant eos sub alis suis, usque dum renovantur in statum priorem. et quamente sunt qui parentibus propriis honorem debitum non persolvant." The Göttheim MS is edited by G. Heider in Archiv für Kunde Österreichischer Geschichts-Quellen V (1850); the hoopoe-passage is on pp. 579 f. Cf. F. Wilhelm, Denkmäler deutscher Prosa des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts (Abteilung B: Kommentar) = Münchener Texte VIII (Munich, 1916), p. 42, section 25. The statement in G. Ehrismann, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelal-

end of the Middle Ages, the stork had replaced the hoopoe as symbol of family love.<sup>1</sup>

Parental devotion of the hoopoe to its young is at least alluded to in hoopoe-shamir stories of the parent bird breaking through obstacles in order to gain access to the nest.<sup>2</sup> It must have been accepted as a fact quite universally in the Graeco-Roman world, else the presumably proverbial expression *ἔτορος ετοργή* (love of the hoopoe who willingly sacrifices its life for its brood) could not have arisen.<sup>3</sup> In Hebrew-Mohammedan tradition it is customary to extoll the hoopoe's (hudhud's) love of its young.<sup>4</sup> Of medieval occidental occurrences of this belief, however, I know of only one, that in the Picardy Bestiary (Arsenal 3516, Paris). There the hoopoe is said to be attached to the eggs, sitting on them assiduously; it is devoted to its offspring

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ters, II, 1 (Munich, 1922), p. 230, that in the Jüngere Physiologus (ca. 1125) the hoopoe signifies such as do not honor their parents is wrong. As a matter of fact, the hoopoe is cited as an example of filial piety; see "Der jüngere Physiologus" in Denkmäler deutscher Prosa des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts, ed. F. Wilhelm (Münchener Texte VIII [Munich, 1914]), p. 27, section 25; also Th. G. von Karajan, Deutsche Sprachdenkmale des zwölften Jahrhunderts (Vienna, 1846), pp. 103 f.; this is the section on the hoopoe in the rhymed Physiologus of the Milstat MS. See also Le Bestiaire. Das Tierbuch des normannischen Dichters Guillaume le Clerc, ed. R. Reinsch ("Altfranzös. Textbibliothek," XIV, Leipzig, 1892), p. 259, vss. 865-870:

Car Deu comanda en la lei,  
Que nos devom tenir en fei,  
Qu'om pere e mere honorast  
E qu'om les servist e gardast  
E pramist que de mort morreit  
Qui pere ou mere maldireit.

These verses are taken from the conclusion of the section on the hoopoe (la hupe). See also below the quotation from Hugo de St. Victore.

<sup>1</sup>Goldstaub-Wendringer, Ein toscano-venezianischer Bestiarius (Halle, 1892), p. 377. Joachim Camerarius, no. XL: "de Cicconiae in parentes gratitudine." Camerarius treats also of the hoopoe, but he does not mention it as an exponent of filial piety.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. above, p. 18, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Aelian, De natura animalium, XVI, 5; cf. Köhler, Das Tierleben..., p. 186.

<sup>4</sup>Salzberger, p. 77, n. 12.

and cares for the young until they are able to shift for themselves. This same belief may have inspired the decoration found on a bench-front at Great Gransden (Huntshire, England): a bird, probably a hoopoe, and a nest with two eggs.<sup>1</sup>

Far more extensive is the evidence of the hoopoe's filial devotion to its parents.

Aelian (ca. 150 A.D.) reports that the Egyptians used to honor the hoopoe because of its piety toward its parents.<sup>2</sup> An elaboration of this account is contained in Horapollo's work on hieroglyphics, where the hoopoe is declared to be the only one of the animals that are devoid of understanding, to show kindness to

<sup>1</sup>G. C. Druce, "The mediaeval bestiaries, and their influence on ecclesiastical decorative art," The Journal of the British Archaeological Association, N.S. XXV (1919), 82.

<sup>2</sup>Aelian, *De natura animalium*, X, 16: "Αἰνέουσι τοὺς γονεῖς ἐν τῷ στήθει, ὡς καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι." Cf. F. Lauchert, *Geschichte des Physiologus* (Strassburg, 1889), p. 13; Houghton, *Natural History of the Ancients*, p. 207; Gubernatis II, 230; Thompson, *Glossary*, p. 56, s.v. *ἵππος*, and p. 102, s.v. *κορυμβός*; Ingersoll, p. 153; Swainson, pp. 107 f.; Aelian, XVI, 5, tells of an Indian legend according to which a young prince was so devoted to his late parents that he buried them in his head (ἐν τῷ κεφαλῇ ἐνταφίσας). The sun god rewards this expression of filial piety by changing the prince into a hoopoe, a bird that is both beautiful and longlived. Aelian mentions in this connection that Aristophanes (*Aves*, vss. 472 ff.) refers to this story (burial in the head) à propos of the *κορυμβός* (crested lark, "Haubenlerche"); cf. F. Lauchert, p. 13; Grünbaum, *Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges.*, pp. 207 f. (as a reward for filial piety the *λῆφος* = tuft of hair on crown of head was changed into hoopoe). Not as a symbol of filial piety, but as a symbol of piety in general ("tamquam symbolum pietatis") the hoopoe occurs on coins struck in honor of the youth Antinous by his imperial "friend" Hadrian, if I read correctly Forcellini, Vol. VI, s.v. "upupa." Filial devotion was not only claimed for the hoopoe by the ancients, by some patristic writers, and in the physiologus-bestiary tradition. The stork, the crow, the merops (bee-eater), and the pelican share honors with the hoopoe. Stork: older Greek writers; cf. E. W. Martin, *The Birds of the Latin Poets* (Stanford, 1914), pp. 52 f.; Max Wellmann, pp. 98-100; Aelian, II, 22, and X, 16; *Orig. c. Cels.*, IV, 98 (cf. Wellmann, p. 8); also no. 18 of the Rumanian Physiologus (MS dated 1717; the translation, however, is older; cf. Lauchert, Nachtrag, p. 308). Bee-eater: Aristotle, *H. A.*, IX, 13 (does not wait until parents have become enfeebled by old age), also Aelian and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, X, 20; cf. Dawson, pp. 590 f. The same story as is told of the hoopoe is told of the bird "lampo" in *Bestiario moralizzato* (2nd half of 13th cent.); cf. Goldstaub-Wendringer, p. 190, n. On the pelican's love for its young, cf. Wellmann, pp. 48 ff. For birds as examples or symbols of *miser cordia*, *pietas*, *eximia pietas*, cf. Goldstaub-Wendringer, pp. 375-378.



its parents. For this reason the Egyptians use the *κουκούφα* (i.e. hoopoe) as symbol for gratitude in their picture writing and place it on the scepters of gods. Some of the details in Horapollo's account, notably the plucking of the feathers of the parent-birds, seem to be derived from the *Physiologus*, chap. viii. Practically the same particulars occur in the medieval bestiaries. They, of course, derive from the same source.<sup>1</sup>

In Hebrew-Moslem tradition the filial devotion of the hoopoe is mentioned at least once: Solomon at one time was so incensed against the hoopoe that he was ready to kill it. He was prevented from doing it because he remembered the hoopoe's kind actions toward its parents.<sup>2</sup>

In the Occident, on the other hand, and in the Byzantine East the legend of the hoopoe's pious treatment of its aged parents is well established, as has been mentioned before. It evidently has its source in the *Physiologus*, chapter viii. The tradition is continued through the stream of the bestiaries and a number of encyclopaedic works, and it seems to end, as far as western Europe is concerned, with the *Physiologus* of Leonardo da Vinci and the *Theriotropheum Silesiae* of the Silesian physician Schwenckfeld.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, this legend is not of the kind which is

<sup>1</sup>*Horapollinis Niloi Hieroglyphica* (ed. Conradus Leemans, Amsterdam, 1835), Book I, chap. lv (p. 54): "Εὐχαριστῶν χάριτας, κουκουφὸν ἑρπυγίδου (i.e. "upupa") διότι τοῦτο μόνον τῶν εἰδωμένων, ἐκείνου ἀπὸ τῶν γενέων ἐκτρέφει, γράσσει αὐτοῖς τὴν αὐτὴν τροφὴν, ὡς καὶ οἱ αὐτῶν ἐκτρέφοντες ἐστὶν, νεοσσὸν αὐτοῦ πολὺν, ἵλλα δὲ αὐτῶν τὰ πτερά, τρώει τε γόνατι μὲν οὐκ ἀποφθεγγόμενος οἱ γονεῖς, βοηθεῖν αὐτοῖς δοκῶν ὡς οὐδὲν αὐτῶν φιλῶν ἐκτρέφον κουκουφὸν ἀποτίμησις ἐστὶν." Except that it has no interest in hieroglyphics and does not mention the scepters of gods, the corresponding section of several medieval bestiaries could be cited as a more or less accurate translation of this passage. One is given in full below; cf. Lauchert, p. 13; *Dictionnaire National* (Bescherelle), II, s.v. "huppe" (mentions "le sceptre d'Horus"). On Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* and their relation with the *Physiologus*, cf. Wellmann, pp. 60 ff. On Horapollo, I, 55, cf. Wellmann, p. 65. On *κουκούφα* see Wellmann, p. 65, note 182; Thompson, *Glossary*, p. 102; E. Oder, pp. 551 f., note 3; Dawson, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Salzberger, p. 77, with note 12.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *passim* Lauchert, Goldstaub-Wendrin, and Wellman. Schwenckfeld, *Theriotropheum Silesiae* (Liegnitz, 1603), 369 a: the hoopoe is said to be ("fertur") a model of filial devotion; cf. 374 b, where the vulture (Geier) is mentioned as another model of filial devotion. These passages are cited in *Mitteilungen der schles. Gesellschaft für Vkunde*, XXIX (1928), 289 f.

found in learned books only, handed down by one antiquarian to the next one. The filial piety of the hoopoe has been the inspiration of a number of artists and craftsmen whose work survives to this day in illuminations of manuscripts and in ecclesiastical decorations of churches in England and on the continent. And the medieval preacher, as has been noted before, has often used the story of the hoopoe when exhorting his flock that they should honor father and mother.

The following examples serve to illustrate the medieval legend of the hoopoe and its filial piety.

First, one example from the Byzantine East: MS of the Smyrna Library, ca. 1100 A.D. In addition to plucking the feathers and licking the eyes of the old birds, the young warm them under their wings and sit over them until they have grown young once more. The miniature accompanying this passage shows hoopoes with blue bodies and gold wings.<sup>1</sup>

Le Bestiaire de Philippe de Thaün (fl. 1100-1135), edited by E. Walberg (1900), pp. 93-95, vss. 2575 ff.:

Huppe oisel apelum,  
Teste at cume pouin.  
E est de tel nature,  
Si cum dit escripture,  
Quant il veit vieil sun pere  
E enveillir sa mere,  
Qu'il ne poent voler  
Ne veer ne aler,  
Suz ses eles les prent  
Sis cuvè ensemment  
Cum sis pere faiseit  
Quant il en of esteit;  
E par sun cuvement  
Si [lur] vient veement,  
Qu'il [poent] bien voler,  
La u [volent], aler.<sup>2</sup>

Hugo de Saint Victore (d. 1141 A.D.), Liber de bestiis, I, chap. lli: "de upupa Physiologus dicit quod cum senuerit et volare non possit, filii eius ad eam veniunt et pennas vetustissimas e corpore ipsius evellunt, eamque fovere non cessant, et donec iterum pennae crescant, cibis sustenant, ut Scriptura dicit, donec sicut ante assumptis viribus evolare possit. Exemplo igitur

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<sup>1</sup>J. Strzygowski, Der Bilderkreis des griechischen Physiologus des Kosmas Indikopleustes und Oktateuch nach Handschriften der Bibliothek zu Smyrna ("Byzantinisches Archiv," II, Leipzig, 1899), 17.

<sup>2</sup>Gf. Ch.-V. Langlois, La vie en France..., p. 25.

suo upupae perversos homines arguunt, qui patres suos, cum senuerint, a domibus propriis expellunt, qui eos, cum deficient, sustentare renuunt, qui tamen ipsos, cum adhuc parvuli essent, educaverunt. Videat igitur homo rationalis creatura, quid patri vel matri debeat, cum irrationalis creatura, quod praediximus, in necessitate cum senuerint, parentibus reddat."<sup>1</sup>

Le Bestiaire. Das Tierbuch des normannischen Dichters Guillaume le Clerc (fl. 1210 A.D.), ed. R. Reinsch ("Altfranzösische Textbibliothek," XIV [Leipzig, 1892]), pp. 83 f., 257-59, vss. 821-870.

Frater Bartholomaeus Anglicus, de proprietatibus rerum (ca. 1250 A.D.), an encyclopedia, consisting of nineteen or twenty books, often copied and printed (13th to 16th cent.), translated into French in 1372; in Book XII of the printed version of 1505, the "upupa" is no. 37 (likewise in the printed version of London, 1535, where the hoopoe corresponds to "lapwing").<sup>2</sup>

Brunetto Latini (ca. 1220-1295), I libri naturali del "Tesoro" (ca. 1262-1266), ed. G. Battelli (Florence, 1917), pp. 124 f.: "Della upupa. Upupa è uno uccello con una cresta in capo, e vivono di cose putride e laide, e però è il loro fiato puzzolente molto. E quando le loro madri invecchiano tanto che non possono bene volare, li loro figliuoli le prendono e mettonle nel nido, e spennanle tutte, ed ungono loro occhi, e tengonle coperte con le loro ale, e tanto le portano beccare, infino ch'elle possono bene volare, sì come è mestiero."<sup>3</sup>

MS 233, Bern: "The Naturalist has said: There is a bird which is called hoopoe. When the young of these birds see their parents grown old and unable to fly or see through blindness, then these their children pluck off the very old feathers from their parents and lick their eyes and cherish their parents under their wings until their feathers grow again and their eyes become bright; so that they are made quite young again in body as before, and can see and fly and show their gratitude to their children, because they have fulfilled their duty towards their parents with

<sup>1</sup>Migne, Patrologia Latina, CLXXVII, 50-51; quoted in part in Brunetto Latini, I libri naturali del "Tesoro" (ed. G. Battelli, Florence, 1917), p. 125.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Le Bestiaire, ed. Reinsch, p. 184; Dawson, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Goldstaub-Wendrin, pp. 159 ff.

such love. . . . But their children say to them: Behold, sweetest of parents, as you have brought us up from infancy, and have made us the object of all your labors, so in your old age we are paying you the same services and ministrations." Then follows the moral: "If birds, which have no reasoning power, treat one another in turn like this, how can men, seeing that they are possessed of reason, refuse to render like for like to their own parents?"<sup>1</sup>

The young hoopoes restore sight to the parent birds, according to Konrad von Megenberg (14th century).<sup>2</sup>

Fior de (di) vertu (15th cent.), chap. xii: the young pluck feathers around the eyes of parents (maximamente tutte quelle che son dintorno alli ochi); "polo" = upupa is symbol of misericordia.

Leonardo da Vinci's Bestiary, no. 7: "upica" = "upupa"; the young build a nest for the parents, feed them, pluck old feathers, and restore eyesight to their parents by means of a herb.<sup>3</sup>

The Serbian Physiologus (16th cent.): old hoopoes are fed in their nests by the young.<sup>4</sup>

Following the traditional traits found in the Bestiaries (especially plucking of the feathers and licking of the eyes), the filial piety of the hoopoe is depicted in a miniature in MS 61 (St. John's, Oxford), also on a misericord at Carlisle Cathedral, possibly also on a misericord carving in St. George's Chapel. In these instances the hoopoes are without crests. The crest, when present, is commonly of the ball-headed pin type. Occasionally it appears as a saw-like ridge upon the head and the back of the bird, as in Harl. 3244 and in Sloane 278.<sup>5</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Druce, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Konrad von Megenberg, Buch der Natur, ed. Pfeiffer, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Goldstaub-Wendrin, p. 250: upupa is symbol of gratitude in Cecco d'Ascoli's and in Leonardo's Bestiaries; p. 252, note; p. 253, note 2; Le Bestiaire, ed Reinsch, p. 193, with reference to a similar story, told about bird Funun, in an Arabic cosmography by Kazwini; Brunetto Latini, p. 215, note.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Le Bestiaire, ed. Reinsch, p. 176.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Druce, pp. 81 f. and Plate XVI.

Smyrna MS, mentioned above, a second miniature, accompanying the chapter concerning the hoopoe, illustrates the ἐγκατενεία, i.e. the allegorical interpretation of the passage. The miniature suggests persecution of the parents and the curse that has been placed upon such a sin in Exodus 21: 15 and 17, a passage which is quoted here, and which, with its parallels, occurs frequently in connection with the legend of the filial piety of the hoopoe.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Strzygowski, op. cit., and Plate III.

CHAPTER IV  
THE HOOPOE, THE CUCKOO'S SEXTON

Popular tradition occasionally associates the hoopoe with other birds. Among them are (a) the bittern (Rohrdommel, *botaurus stellaris*),<sup>1</sup> (b) the woodpigeon (Wildtaube, Holztaube, *palumbus torquatus* or *columba oenas*),<sup>2</sup> (c) the thrush (Drossel, *turdus*),<sup>3</sup> (d) the snipe or woodcock (Schnepfe, *scolopax gallinula*?),<sup>4</sup> (e) the wood-pecker or popinjay (Specht, *picus*; or Grünspecht, *picus viridis*), (f) the nightingale (Nachtigall, *lusciniæ philomela*), (g) the nutcracker or nutbreaker ? (Nusskrähe, *nucifraga caryocatactes*), and, most important among the birds that are assumed to consort with the hoopoe, (h) the cuckoo. The belief in the hoopoe-cuckoo partnership is so strong in certain sections of Europe that it has given rise to a new name for the hoopoe, that of "Kuckucksküster" (cuckoo's sexton), "Kuckuckslakai" (cuckoo's lackey), or "Kuckucks knecht" (cuckoo's hired man).

(a) The hoopoe and the bittern were at one time herdsmen. They were changed into these birds as a punishment for cruelty. East Prussia, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg seem to constitute the small area where this tradition is known.

The remainder of the hoopoe associations, except the one with the cuckoo, are apparently even more restricted in territory: (b) the hoopoe and the woodpigeon are companions in Brandenburg and, east of it, in Gújavia (Poland); (c) the hoopoe and the thrush in the Altmark (a part of Brandenburg); (d) the hoopoe and the snipe (woodcock) in Denmark.

(e) The hoopoe-woodpecker friendship is recorded for Upper Brittany, France. The two birds decide to quit their native land. In flying over the ocean, the woodpecker, when half-

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<sup>1</sup>Grimm, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, no. 173; Bolte-Polívka, III, 285 f.; Dähnhardt, III, 4394 ff.; Wossidlo, II, 362; nos. 286-291 on pp. 45-47; Thompson, *Motif-Index*, I, no. A 2261.1; see also A 2426.2.4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



way across, becomes drowsy and is in danger of falling into the sea, but the hoopoe rouses it by calling out "hump, hump." The woodpecker shows its gratitude for having been saved from a watery grave by boring a hole in a tree, to serve as nest for the hoopoe. This was the first time the woodpecker exercised its boring powers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>P. Sébillot, *Traditions de la Haute-Bretagne*, II, 185; Swainson, p. 108; cf. Dähnhardt, III, 1, p. 266. This tale contains a number of traits which occur in a variety of combinations in popular tradition concerning animals, especially birds:

A. Decision to quit one's native land because of disgrace incurred by some act committed by, or some quality inherent in the emigrant. The heron (Reiher, ardea) decides to leave its home country because it has become known that it is constantly befouling its nest. When its attention is called to the fact that it is carrying along its anus, the source of its ill fame, the heron stays at home. Cf. Voigt, *Egberts von Lüttich Fecunda Ratis* (1889), p. 100, n. to vs. 484: "ardea nomen avis, nomen de ventre cacatrix" (Schitttreiher); the note contains additional references; p. 193, vss. 1522-25: "de ardea, quae ubique idem est, i.e. cacatrix." The date of *Fecunda Ratis* is ca. 1020 A.D. *Johannis de Schepeya, Fab. III*: "ardea et aquila: ...timeo ne portes tecum tuum posterius. consuetudo enim ardeae est ut inficiat omnem locum in quo sederit." Quoted from Hervieux, *Les fabulistes Latins* (Paris, 1884), II, 775. Alanus de (ab) Insulis (d. 1202), *Parabol. I*, 94 f.: "Non ibis rostrum, non ardea deserit anum, non leviter uicium, dum facit illud homo" (*Z.f.d.t.A.*, XXIII [1879], 286). Joseph Klapper, *Die Sprichwörter der Freidankpredigten Proverbia Fridanci* ("Wort und Brauch," XVI, Breslau, 1927), 20, no. 33: "ardea fert secum, quocunque volaverit, anum" (from Breslau MS, I.Q.50, beginning of 15th cent.). Adalbert von Keller, *Erzählungen aus altdeutschen Handschriften* ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," XXXV [1855]), pp. 564 f.: "von dem reyer" (Karlsruhe MS). *Mitteldeutsche Fabeln*, ed. K. Eichhorn (Program Meiningen, 1897), II (Text), pp. 58-59, containing no. LXXXIX (lines 3777-3854) of the "Esopus theutunicus et Avianus," (MS 1279, Leipzig): "Der reier bescheisz die andern vagele." The other birds engage the heron to drive the hawk out of its narrow hiding place. The hawk "brachte den reier in einen swiez, / das he wiet unde verne hinder sich scheisz. / Sine gesellen worden alle beschissen..." The heron decides to leave, comes to the sea-shore, is met by the crow which, upon learning the reason for emigrating, tells the heron: "...wolt ir uch schizene maszen, / so must ir den ars hinder uch laszen. / Ziet öber brügke unde ober steeg, / so fürt ir denselbigen ars met uch weg..." The MS dates from the middle of the 15th cent., Eastern Middle Germany.

The stork (Storch, ciconia) wants to leave because, in a quarrel, it has deprived another stork (its wife) of an eye. It is informed by a bird (stork, raven) that it is taking along its bill, the cause of the injury. The stork stays at home. Only with the stork and the ibis (cf. Alanus de Insulis) the offending member is the bill, otherwise always the anus. Cf. Hervieux, II, 606: *Odonis de Ceritona* (ca. 1200), *Fabulae XV* (XXXIII): "de ciconia litigante cum coniuge sua," where, at the conclusion of his "mistice" he quotes the well known line from Horace (*epist. I. 11, 27*): "coelum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare cur-

(f) The hoopoe is associated with the nightingale by the medieval teacher Odo de Ceritona in one of his fables. He wishes

runt." E. Voigt, "Odo de Ciringtonia und seine Quellen," Z.f.dt. A., XXIII (N.F. XI, 1879), 286: 11 (L.XII, 136 f.): "ciconia semel rixata est cum uxore." Voigt quotes medieval parallels à propos of hawk and woodpecker. Johannes de Bromyard, Summa praedicantium (Basel, 1479), p. xiii, xxxviii exemplum: the conversation takes place between "ciconia" and "alia avis." J. Pauli, Schimpf und Ernst, ed. H. Osterley ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," LXXXV [1866]), p. 301, no. 523 (von gewonheit), = ed. Bolte I (1924), 301; II, 376.

The magpie (Elster, pica) wants to leave because of its cauda ("tail"). Cf. Alexandri Nequam Novus Aesopus, XXXVIII: "de pica et cauda sua: cum patria turpem credens se linquere morem... vibravit caudam more priore suam"; quoted from Hervieux, II, 808 f.

As early as the 13th century the heron fable (bewraying one's environs) is told of the sea gull, as no. 45 of the Hebrew fairy tale collection Mischle Sch'alim by Berachja Hannakdan, cf. Bolte-Polivka, IV, 337 (with add. refs.).

The same fable (fouling one's nest, decision to leave the country, etc.) is told of the hoopoe. The adviser in this version is the cuckoo ("gauch"), the uncle of the hoopoe. Cf. K. Goedeke, Deutsche Dichtung im Mittelalter (Dresden, 1871), p. 642a: "of einem zune stuont ein gouch..." ascribed to the Stricker, ca. 1230. Franz Pfeiffer, Z.f.dt.A., VII (1849), 360-363 (Vienna MS, no. 2705; 13th-14th cent., and Würzburg MS, no. 341, 14th cent.).

B. Hoopoe rouses by calling "up-up." In East Prussia, the hoopoe raises old horses up in the spring of the year; cf. Lemke, Volkst. in Ostpreussen, 2, 19, no. 35, in Dähnhardt, III, 1, p. 396. In Mecklenburg, the hoopoe together with the wood-pigeon and the cuckoo, keep a cow. When it falls into a swamp, the hoopoe calls "up, up, oll up," cf. Wossidlo, 2, no. 290. A similar tale is recorded for Brandenburg: the hoopoe calls "olle uppupup," cf. Engeliien and Lahn, Der Volkemund in der Mark Brandenburg, I, 111 f., in Dähnhardt, ibid.; Friedr. Drosihn, Kinderreime und Verwandtes, no. 146, explains the hoopoe's call as "oss (= ox), up, up" (Pomerania).

Among the Armáni or Aramáni (= "Romans," die Aromunen), i.e. the Rumanians inhabiting the Mt. Pindus districts, neighbors of the Macedonians, this story is told: their ancestor or one of their chiefs, while fleeing from the enemy, is forced to abandon his horse which is stuck in a bog. The only other living being at hand is the cuckoo. Its cry "coo, coo" fails to rouse the horse. But the hoopoe's "up, up" causes the horse to extricate itself. Thus it is saved from a miserable death. The chief continues his flight. In recognition of the hoopoe's service he changes the bird's name to that of the cuckoo, so that the hoopoe has to this day among the Armáni the cuckoo's name. Cf. Marianu, Ornithologia, II, 165; Dähnhardt, op. cit.; Gaster, Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories (London, 1915), pp. 288 f. (Gaster tells the story of an "Armenian" chief. This is evidently a lapsus). It is, of course, meet that these inland tales should confine themselves to swamps and the like, whereas the Brittany version introduces a sea voyage.

C. Helpful birds. Cf. Thompson, Motif-Index, I,



to point a moral, and for this reason joins the hoopoe, the representative of the base and foul, with the nightingale, the representative of all that is sweet and charming. This pairing does not, as far as I know, rest on popular tradition, but is wholly "learned."<sup>1</sup>

(g) In Bohemia, the hoopoe marries the "Nusskrähe" at an elaborate wedding.<sup>2</sup>

Excepting the hoopoe-woodpecker comradeship (Upper Brittany, France) and excepting the hoopoe-"Nusskrähe" matrimonial alliance (Bohemia), all popular hoopoe associations, then, that have been listed so far, are current along the south and west coasts of the Baltic, from East Prussia to Denmark, and as far south as Brandenburg and Gújavia.

(h) It is different with the hoopoe-cuckoo partnership. The geographical distribution of the belief in some sort of union of these two birds is much wider than the belief in the other hoopoe alliances. Hoopoe-cuckoo tales and beliefs are found in Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Brandenburg and Altmark, Schleswig-Holstein with Lübeck, the Hamburg and Bremen vicinity with Stade, (North) Thuringia, Upper Germany, and Austria in general, Bavaria, the Tyrol, Bohemia, Moravia, Transsylvania, and Rumania.<sup>3</sup> In other

no. B 450.

D. Animal grateful for rescue from drowning. Cf. Thompson, I, no. B 362, with reference to Folklore Fellows Communications, 56 (= W. Wienert, Typen der griechisch-römischen Fabel); Thompson, no. B 527.

<sup>1</sup>Hervieux, II, 639: Odonis de Ceritona Fabulae, ex Bibliothecae Regiae Monacensis Mso Codicis Latino 8356, no. LI (IX): "de upupa et philomena." Another "learned" hoopoe association is probably Abstemius, Fab. 45 (hoopoe appears at eagle's wedding) = B. Waldis, II, 76 = Kirchhof, Wendunmuth, 7, 60.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Wenzig, Westslawischer Märchenschatz (Leipzig, 1857), pp. 241 f. (Wenzig, Bibliothek slawischer Poesien in Deutscher Übertragung, [Prague, 1875], pp. 47 f.) Cf. Alfred Waldau, Böhmische Granaten (1858), p. 132, no. 163.

<sup>3</sup>General references: Bolte-Polívka, III, pp. 285 f., no. 173. K. Heckscher, Die Volkskunde des germanischen Kulturkreises. An Hand der Schriften Ernst Moritz Arndts und gleichzeitlicher wie neuerer Parallelbelege dargestellt (Hamburg, 1925), pp. 219, 443, n. 54. Suolahti, Die deutschen Vogelnamen. Eine wortgeschichtliche Untersuchung (Strassburg, 1909), pp. 14 f. Wessidlo, Mecklenburgische Volksüberlieferungen, II, 1 (Wismar, 1899), pp. 362 f.

Pomerania: Blätter für pommersche Volkskunde, VIII (1900),

words, a hoopoe-cuckoo affinity in one form or another is known in two large European areas: (1) the North Central part, with

106.

Mecklenburg: K. Bartsch, Sagen, Märchen und Gebräuche aus Mecklenburg (Vienna, 1879 and 1880), II, 179. C.-M. Blaas, Mecklenb. Sagen, II, 179, no. 856; cf. Germania, XXIV (N.R.XII, 1879), 414 f. Schiller, Zum Tierbuche, II, 12 f. (quotes Colerus Calender, p. 83).

Brandenburg and Altmark: Engelen-Lahn, p. 111, no. 1 (together with woodpigeon, see above). Joh. Friedr. Danneil, Wörterbuch der altmärkischen-plattdeutschen Mundart (Salzwedel, 1859), 87, 114 (Kukukskoster, Kosterwupk).

Schleswig-Holstein: J. F. Schütze, Holsteinisches Idiotikon. Ein Beitrag zur Volksittengeschichte (Hamburg, 1800; Altona, 1806), II, 335, 364 (Wiedehopf = Kukuks Koster = Quäkker); cited in Korrespondenzblatt des Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforschung, XVII (1893), 4, and in Heckscher, p. 443, n. 54. O. Mensing, Schleswig-Holsteinisches Wörterbuch, III (1931), cols. 361 f. (Wiedehopf = Kukukskoster, den Kukuk sien Koster, K. und sien Koster), two references are for Schleswig. Matthias Claudius, Rheinweinlied (K. und sein Küster).

Lübeck: Korrespondenzblatt d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforschung, XVI (1892), 83, see "Lübecker Vogelnamen": Wiedehopf = Kukukskoster. Schumann, Der Wortschatz von Lübeck (Strassburg, 1907), 3.

Hamburg and Bremen vicinity: Versuch eines bremisch-niedersächsischen Wörterbuchs. Hrg. v. der bremischen deutschen Ges., 5 vols. Bremen, 1767-1770; 6 parts, 1767-1771, II, 858. Korrespondenzblatt d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforsch., XXXVI (1917-1918), 55 f. (at the Lower Weser).

North Thuringia: Reichardt, "Volksanschauungen über Tiere und Pflanzen in Nordthüringen," Z.d.Ver.f.Vkunde, X (1900), 211. A. Wuttke and E. H. Meyer, Der deutsche Volksaberglaube der Gegenwart (Leipzig, 1925), p. 123.

Upper Germany, esp. Austria (general): M. Höfer, Etymologisches Wörterbuch der in Oberdeutschland vorzüglich aber in Oesterreich üblichen Mundart (Linz, 1815), III, 310 (des Guckucks Lackey). Cf. above, p. 32, n. 1 A: the poem ascribed to the Stricker, an Austrian?

Bavaria: Konrad von Megenberg, Buoch der Natur (14th cent.), ed. Pfeiffer, p. 228; Swainson, p. 109 (hoopoe = attendant or lackey to cuckoo).

Tyrol: Heye, Tirol, VII, 90 f. (cited in Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens, V, 738: cuckoo initiates hoopoe into hellish tricks). Alpenburg, Mythen und Sagen Tirols (Zürich, 1857), p. 386 ("Wadhupf in tirol, der auch Kukukslakei heiszt").

Bohemia: Wuttke-Meyer, p. 123. For North Bohemia: Český lid, VIII, 711, cited in Dähnhardt, III, 1, p. 512 (hoopoe and cuckoo wish to buy a horse). Grohmann, Sagen aus Böhmen, p. 245 (cf. above, "The Hoopoe, the Crested Bird").

Moravia: P. F. Příkryl, "Die Bevölkerung am 'Záhoří' in Mähren," Z.f.österr. Vkunde, I (1895), 242: "von den Vögeln sagt man: ... Der Kukuk: Pokud? = Bis wohin? - Der Wiedehopf erwidert: Po potok = Bis zum Bach."

Transylvania: F. W. Schuster, Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Volkslieder (Hermannstadt, 1865), p. 348, nos. 100 and 101:

Germany, Bohemia, Moravia, Austria proper, and the Tyrol, and (2) Transsylvania and Rumania, including the Rumanians of the Mt. Pindus district.

The connecting link between (1) and (2) may be the Low German "Saxons" who were settled in Siebenbürgen (Transylvania) in the middle of the twelfth century by King Gejza II. These people may have transplanted a popular belief of their old North German home into their new country. This would "explain" the existence of the hoopoe-cuckoo tradition beyond Hungary, outside of that more or less solid Central European block. Again, the migration route of the hoopoe may be the or one deciding or contributing factor in the establishment or continuance of this hoopoe tale in and near the Carpathian Mountains and the Transylvanian Alps. This is merely another guess. I am inclined to believe that the true explanation for the lacuna--Hungary--is my lack of information about the bird lore of the Magyars.

So much for the geographical distribution of the hoopoe-cuckoo tales. Chronologically the hoopoe-cuckoo affinity dates back to Greek antiquity. According to the Tereus legend, this wicked king was changed into a hoopoe or into a hawk. The hawk, in turn, is intimately associated with the cuckoo, one being converted into the other. This belief was current in antiquity and is not yet extinct.<sup>1</sup> The existence of the hoopoe-cuckoo tradition

cuckoo calls "Kuk! Kuk!" and hoopoe calls "Hup! Hup!"

Rumania: Gaster, pp. 229 f., no. LXXVI (hoopoe borrows cuckoo's tuft). Revue des trad. popul., IX, 627. Marianu, 2, 8 = Revue des trad. pop., VIII, 42; 2, 159, 169 (cuckoo is the husband, hoopoe the wife in Rumanian versions of the fairytale of the fisherman and his wife; cf. Dähnhardt, III, 1, pp. 405 f.). See also note 1 B (p. 32).

<sup>1</sup>Eugen Oder, "Der Wiedehopf in der griechischen Sage," Rhein. Museum, N.F. XLIII (1888), 541-56. W. Wackernagel, Kl. Schriften, III, 238 with note 2. Thompson, Glossary, pp. 55, 88 f. (cuckoo-hawk metamorphosis, connected with resemblance of the two birds), 102 (hoopoe and cuckoo on scepters), 82 (hawk = *κίρκος*, in turn, converted into hoopoe); contains refs. to Aristotle, Pliny, Plutarch. Cf. above Dawson, pp. 591 f. for confusion existing among classical writers between bee-eater, hoopoe, woodpecker. Oder, p. 549, assumes a popular confusion of hoopoe and cuckoo and suggests this confusion to be the reason for naming the celestial city which Aristophanes has built by the *ἑὸς* ("hoopoe") *νῆσος* (the cuckoo land in the clouds). Swainson, p. 113. Z.f.dt. Mythologie und Sittenkunde, III (1855), 276 f. J. W. Brunler, D. Vlied (5th ed., Leipzig-Berlin, 1914), pp. 89 f. (Kuckuck and Sperber). FFG, VIII, 17, no. 95 (Finnish). Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie, II, 565.

during the Middle Ages is vouchsafed by the Stricker and Konrad von Wegenberg references, given above. For modern times, there is a cloud of witnesses, including the dialect glossaries and dictionaries (see above, p. 33, n. 3).

Geographically as well as chronologically, then, the belief in a hoopoe-cuckoo partnership is more extensive than the belief in the other hoopoe alliances.

This relationship of hoopoe and cuckoo assumes a variety of phases and degrees of intimacy. Noteworthy is uncle-nephew and husband-wife relation.<sup>1</sup> Once they appear as teacher and pupil, in the Heye citation under Tyrol (see above). Occasionally the two birds are associated as herders, or because they wish to buy a horse.<sup>2</sup>

Again they appear together in stories explaining the provenience of the hoopoe's crest. It is obtained, as has been pointed out before in Chapter I, by borrowing (stealing) it from the cuckoo, usually in connection with a wedding (Rumania and Bohemia). In a number of stories it is evident that the similarity of the calls of the two birds has helped to bring them together, so much so, that in the Macedorumanian story of the Mt. Pindus district, referred to above, the hoopoe's name is changed into that of the cuckoo.

Similarity of the two bird calls, often creating the impression that the hoopoe was deliberately trying to imitate the

<sup>1</sup>For cuckoo = uncle and hoopoe = nephew, cf. above, p. 32, end of note 1 A (Stricker). For cuckoo = husband and hoopoe = wife, cf. Gaster, pp. 162 f., no. XLIII; pp. 164-67 (versions of Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen, no. 19: Fischer un sine Fru). Marianu, II, 159, 8, 169. Revue des trad. popul., VIII, 41. Dähnhardt, III, 1, 405 f. The hoopoe is a "she" in "Vogel-Schul" (Breslau, 1700) = no. 18 of Seelmann's List, see Jahrb. d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforsch., XIV (1888), 116; also "die hoppe" in Haager (Hulthem's) MS, 14th cent., = no. 5 of Seelmann's List = Germania, VI (1861), 232 (Van den voghelen, published by H. F. Maassmann); also in B. Waldis, Esopus, II, no. 76: von der widhopfen, ed. Tittmann, I, pp. 261 f. = ed. Kurz, I, pp. 266 f.

<sup>2</sup>Engelien and Lahn. The two birds and the wood pigeon own a cow; cf. Wossidlo, 2, no. 290 = Dähnhardt, III, 1, 397 (Brandenburg and Mecklenburg). Cesky lid, VIII, 711 = Dähnhardt, III, 1, p. 512: the hoopoe goes to town in order to purchase a horse for himself and his partner, the cuckoo. Having spent the purchase money for drink, the hoopoe, when back in the forest, avoids the cuckoo. Since that time the cuckoo is calling "kup kuu" = "buy the horse," and the hoopoe answers from a distance, "du-du-du" = "I am going, going, going" (Bohemia).



cuckoo's song, coupled with the observation that the hoopoe usually appears on the scene a fortnight before the cuckoo, a sort of John the Baptist heralding the advent of his master, constitutes one of the principal reasons for thinking of the two birds as belonging together and for dubbing the hoopoe "Kuckucksküster" or "-küster" ("cuckoo's sexton"), especially in Northern Germany, or "Kuckuckslakai" or "-knecht."<sup>1</sup> An additional reason may be

<sup>1</sup>Suolahti, 14 f. Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch, V, 2525. Schiller, Zum Tierbuche, II, 12 f. (quoting Colerus Calendar, p. 83): "Die Mecklenburger sagen, der Wiedehopfe sei des Guckucks Küster. Denn wenn sich der mit seinem Nürrischen gelächter oder geschrey auff den Bewmen hören lest, so lest sich auch bald hernach der ander nurr, der Guckuk hören." Wossidlo, II, 45-47. U. Jahn, Volkssagen aus Pommern = E. M. Arndt, Märchen und Jugenderinnerungen, I, 425 (cf. Dähnhardt, III, 1, 399; Heckscher, pp. 200, 219): "Die Leute nennen ihn (i.e. hoopoe) deswegen häufig den Kuckucksküster, weil sein Laut aus der Ferne wirklich oft so klingt, for Wiedehopf = Kuckucksküster in Heckscher, p. 443, n. 54, esp. J. K. Dähnert, Plattdeutsches Wörterbuch nach der alten und neuen pommerschen und rügischen Mundart (Stralsund, 1781), 261, and Gilow, De Diere (Anklam, 1871), p. 317. Cf. O. Mensing, Schleswig-Holstein. Wörterbuch, III (1931), cols. 361 f.; Korrespondenzblatt d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforschung, XVI (1892), 83; XVII (1893), 4; Z.d.Ver.f. Vkunde, X (1900), 211; Gedichte von G. A. Bürger, ed. A. Sauer ("Deutsche National-Literatur", LXXVIII, 2), p. 160; Matthias Claudius, Rheinweinlied. For "Kuckuckslakai" cf. Schiller. For "Kuckucksknecht" cf. Wuttke-Meyer, p. 123. "Kuckucksknecht," however, does not always signify "hoopoe," cf. Lewalter-Schlager, Deutsches Kinderlied und Kinderspiel (1911), no. 103 with note on p. 299. "Küster" as in "Kuckucksküster" occurs also in connection with the nightingale, cf. Korrespondenzblatt etc., XVII (1893), 4: "den Nachtigall sin Küster nennt man einen Vogel, ich glaube 'Lisch allerlei,' der der Nachtigall nachtönt, sie nachahmen zu wollen scheint. 'Lisch-Allerlei' wird die unächte Nachtigall, der Nachtigall Küster, wegen seines buntscheckigen Gesanges genannt."--From the point of view of "human interest," Konrad von Megenberg's note on the hoopoe and the cuckoo is perhaps the most appealing. This 14th cent. Bavarian priest records after the fashion of his day "Urväter Hausrat," as he found it in his source, the de naturis rerum by the learned Dominican Thomas of Cantimpré. But the mention of the hoopoe evidently stirred childhood memories of woods in the springtime in the soul of the grown-up cleric, and these he incorporates into his chapter on the widowhopf: "(der widowhopf) hät neur ain gesank und ain stimm, wan er singet neur hoz hoz hoz, sam der gauch singt guck guck. ich hân auch dick gemerkt ze Megenperch, do ich ain kindel was, daz die zwên vogel zuo enander säzen und sungen mit ain wehsel, der gauch vor, der widowhopf nach, und wând ich, der widowhopf waer des gauches roz und daz si staetes pei ainander waeren," ed. Pfeiffer, p. 228 ("des gauches roz": the

found in the fact that the two birds for a long time have interested the folk (and the "doctors") as being odd in their nesting habits and in the raising of their young.

The association of hoopoe and cuckoo being firmly fixed in the minds of people, it is not surprising to see the two birds mentioned together, i.e. the one following the other, when birds are enumerated, as e.g. in numbers 1 and 2 of Seelmann's list of Vogelsprachen.<sup>1</sup>

The role of the cuckoo's sexton or lackey is not always played by the hoopoe. Thus, the part of the cuckoo's companion in some sections of Germany is given to the "Kiebitz" (pewit, plover, *vanellus cristatus*), a crested bird like the hoopoe. And in some sections of England the companion of the cuckoo is the meadow pipit, called Cuckoo's Sandie or titling (Durham).<sup>2</sup> Most interesting in this connection is the fact that in England, in Sweden, and in Finland, the wryneck ("Wendehals," "Drehhals," *jynx torquilla*) has taken over the function of the cuckoo's sexton. This peculiar bird is known in England as cuckoo's mate, cuckoo's footman, or fool, or messenger, or marrow (= companion, friend), or leader, and as hobby bird (hobby = cuckoo). In Devonshire the wryneck is called "dinnick" or cuckoo's mate. Its Welsh name is *gwas-y-gog*, i.e. cuckoo's knave.<sup>3</sup> In Sweden the

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Stuttgart MS has "ruff," cf. *Germania*, XXIV (N.R. XII, 1879), 415. In Luxemburg the hoopoe is called, for this reason, "Riffer" (= "Rufer," exclaimer, caller, cf. Suolahti, p. 15).

<sup>1</sup>No. 1 (16th cent. Low German): the cuckoo is the 64th, the hoopoe the 65th bird. No. 2 (printed ca. 1500): the hoopoe is the 38th, the cuckoo the 39th bird. Cf. Schuster, where the cuckoo and the hoopoe are nos. 100 and 101, respectively, on p. 348 (cf. above note on Transylvania). Compare also *Z. f. österr. Vkunde*, I (1895), 242, where the cuckoo asks the question and the hoopoe answers it (cf. above, note on Moravia). In the last two instances the similarity in the calls of the birds furnishes an even stronger reason for keeping them united.

<sup>2</sup>*Handwörterbuch d. dt. Aberglaubens*, I (1927), col. 337, s.v. "Alte Jungfer," with ref. to *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, V, 657. Suolahti, p. 267: Federbusch auf dem Kopf des Kiebitz. Swainson, p. 46.--An old English name for "Kiebitz" is lapwing. It will be remembered that older versions of the English Bible, including the Authorized Version, translate "lapwing" where the Revised Version has the (correct) translation "hoopoe." The lapwing, too, is a crested bird; cf. Suolahti.

<sup>3</sup>Swainson, pp. 103, 109. H. Kirke Swann, *A Dictionary of English and Folk-Names of British Birds* (London, 1913), p. 69.

wryneck's name is göktyta (gök = cuckoo), and the Finns call it käen piika (= cuckoo's maid, cuculi ancilla).<sup>1</sup>

The question naturally arises: why is the hoopoe the cuckoo's sexton in an area that is, roughly speaking, the middle strip of Europe, extending from the coasts of the North and the Baltic Seas in a south-easterly direction to Rumania, and why is some other bird, the wryneck, the cuckoo's footman in England, in Sweden, and in Finland, or, again roughly speaking, in that arch which lies north of the hoopoe territory? The explanation seems to lie in the fact that the (African) hoopoe but rarely crosses over into Scandinavia and England--although occasionally it is found as far north as Spitzbergen. In England, at any rate, it is a rare bird.<sup>2</sup> Whether the substitution in Finland of the wryneck for the hoopoe be due to the scarcity of the latter in this region or whether this be due to the cultural influence of Swedish settlers in Finland, I am not able to determine. Nor am I able to say whether the mating and nesting areas of the hoopoe and the wryneck have or have not any bearing on the cuckoo's sexton being the one bird or the other. It is significant, however, I think, that the cuckoo's sexton, even if this role is played by some bird other than the hoopoe, is, with the one exception of the meadow pipit, a crested bird (Kiebitz) or a bird who is able to simulate a crest when occasion arises (wryneck). Again it is significant that the wryneck has recourse to the same grotesque mimic play when trying to scare away an enemy as does the hoopoe, and that it is just as infamous because of its malodorous nest as is the hoopoe.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Grimm, Deutsche Mythologie<sup>4</sup>, ed. E. H. Meyer, III (1878), 196. According to Phil. A. Nennich, Allgemeines Polyglotten-Lexicon der Naturgeschichte (Hamburg and Halle, 1793-95), s.v. "jynx," the wryneck precedes the cuckoo by two weeks, just as the hoopoe. According to Grimm, the Finnish "käen piika" may also refer to the "curruca" ("Grasmücke"). In England, "cuckoo's maid" is the name of the red-backed shrike (Wiesenknarrer, Wachtelkönig, Wachtelmutter, orygometra; cf. H. K. Swann).

<sup>2</sup>Brehm-Haacke, II, 31: "(Der Wiedehopf ist) in England ein seltener Gast, verirrt sich aber zuweilen bis nach Nordskandinavien und Spitzbergen." Suolahti, p. 13: "Wiedehopf in England äusserst selten."

<sup>3</sup>Brehm-Loesche, Die Vögel, I (1891), 634-36. Cf. also the next chapter.

CHAPTER V  
THE HOOPOE, THE BIRD THAT FOULS ITS NEST

The lexicographer Hesychius mentions several names by which the upupa epops L. was known to the Greeks: μακροκέφαλος, the longskulled one; κορυμβάιος, the helmeted one; είντης, the destroyer or robber; ἀλκιγυών, the cock; γέλασος, one who laughs or one who causes laughter (because of his antics?). Beside these five there is, of course, the standard name ἴππος, and because of this total of six names, Hesychius refers to the hoopoe as πολώνυμος, the bird with many names.<sup>1</sup> Were he writing today, I am sure, Hesychius would change his epithet to πλιγιώνυμος, the bird with many, many names.

Some of the "many names" have been listed. There were mentioned in various connections Egyptio-Coptic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Sicilian, Arabic, Italian, French, Swedish, English, and German names. Of these and other hoopoe-names some, perhaps the majority, are onomatopoeic, based on the hoopoe's (mating) call: e.g. the Egyptian, as transmitted in Greek, κοκκούφας, κούκουφος or τοῦπος; Latin: upupa;<sup>2</sup> Armenian: popop; Arabic: hudhud; Persian: pūpū; Lettish: puppukis; Church Slavonic: vudodŭ; Dutch: hop, hoep; the large number of German dialect names, as Hupphupp, Huppuppergeselle, Wuppwupp, Hod-Hod, Huppe, Hupper, Wudi, Wuddwudd, Ossopŭpk, Ossepŭper, Hupk, Lupk, Böck de Röck, etc.; perhaps the Polish dudek and the Wendish (h)upak (hupać, cf. hupać = schreien wie der Wiedehopf; in the dialect of Dubraucke, near Spremberg, Silesia, the name of the hoopoe = hupaz, "von seinem Rufe hup, hup."<sup>3</sup> Even the German "Wiedehopf" seems to have been originally an imitative word; the Greek name

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<sup>1</sup> Πολώνυμον δὲ λέγεται τὸ ἴππον, quoted by Thompson, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>M. Terentius Varro (d. 27 B.C.), de lingua latina, V, section 75: "de his (avibus) pleraque ab suis vocibus ut haec upupa etc." I owe this reference to the kindness of Mr. William Hammer.

<sup>3</sup>Mitt. d. schles. Ges. f. Vkunde, X (1908), Heft XX, 51.



of the hoopoe, ἑτοψ, and the call of this bird, as interpreted by the Greeks, ἑτοροῦ, evidently belong together; the latter has been immortalized by Aristophanes in his Aves (227), where he stretches it into the hendecasyllabic ἑτοροροροροροροροροῦ<sup>1</sup>

Other hoopoe names describe it as a crested bird: κορυδαίλος (the helmeted one); the Silician: cristella; the Low German (in the neighborhood of Göttingen): Wupkam; possibly also the French huppe.<sup>2</sup>

The reasons for the name "Doctor," given the hoopoe by the Arabs, have been enumerated, as well as the reasons for the appellation "Kuckucksküster," found in many parts of Europe. Some of its German names characterize the hoopoe as a frequenter of pastures: Gänsehirt, Fuhrmann, perhaps also Oseepöper, while the standard German "Wiedehopf" (der Wiedehopf, -hopp, -hoppe, -huppe, but also die Wiedehopfe)<sup>3</sup> derives its meaning for most people from the bird's manner of locomotion, Wiedehopf being the same as Wiesen- or Waldhüpfer (in) = meadow- or woods-hopper. Since, however, as mentioned before, the word Wiedehopf in all probability is of onomatopoeic origin, it seems to follow that the meaning "woods-hopper" is read into it through popular etymology. On the other hand, if this explanation be nothing but an attempt to "make sense" out of an otherwise meaningless name, then it must

<sup>1</sup>Cf. above, the beginning of Chapter I; see also Chapter III; Thompson, Glossary, pp. 54 f.; Suolahti, pp. 12-15, with ref. to Naumann-Hennicke, Natursgeschichte der Vögel Mitteleuropas, IV, 376. Mitt. d. schles. Ges. f. Kunde, X (1908), Heft XIX, 94; Heft XX, 51; Korrespondenzblatt d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforsch., XXXIX (1924), 43; W. von Schulenburg, Wendische Volkssagen (Leipzig, 1880), p. 262; H. Frischbier, Preussisches Wörterbuch, II (Berlin, 1883), p. 113; J. F. Dannel, Wörterbuch der altmärkisch-plattdeutschen Mundart (Salzwedel, 1859), pp. 87, 251, 267; Raoul von Dombrowski, Allgemeine Encyclopädie der gesamten Forst- und Jagdwissenschaften, VIII (Vienna and Leipzig, 1894), p. 389. Sometimes the call of the hoopoe is interpreted as "up-up," "oll up" or "olle upupup," cf. above, Chapter IV, p. 32, n. 1 B. At the Lower Weser (Amt Thedinghausen), the hoopoe is called damelär; cf. Korrespondenzblatt etc., XXXVI (1917-18), 55 f. I know of no explanation for this name. Nor am I able to explain the Tyrolean "Giggas," "Gaggas"; cf. Frommann, Die deutschen Mundarten, IV (1857), 56.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the beginning of Chapter I; Suolahti, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>E.g. in Lohenstein, Blumen, 130, cited in Mitt.d.schles. Ges.f.Vkunde, IX (1907), 100; "die Hup" in a Vogelhochzeit of the middle of the 18th cent.; cf. above, note 1, p. 36.

be admitted that the interpretation "woods-hopper" was firmly established in Old High German times already, i.e. in those times when the name -"wituhoffa"- first appears in documents.<sup>1</sup>

Another group of hoopoe names, perhaps the largest group outside of the onomatopoeic group, and one that is to engage our attention now, is that group which characterizes the hoopoe as a "Schmutzvogel," a filthy, sterquilinous fowl.

In France it is called "coq puant" (Anjou), "coq merdeux" (stinkard).<sup>2</sup> The Dutch, especially in Groningen and Gelderland, dub this bird: Drekhahn, Stronthaan, Stronthoepe, Slykhaan, and Schiithoepe, Schijthop (dirt or dung cock, gallus lutosus).<sup>3</sup> In the Scandinavian countries, the hoopoe is known as "hærfugl," "hærpop" (Danish; cf. skidtefugl [Danish dialect]), and härfägel (Swedish). These names are derived from the German "Heervogel" which, according to Heyne in Deutsches Wörterbuch, IV, 761, means "Kotvogel" (dirt or dung bird).<sup>4</sup>

In the German-speaking territory of Europe, the hoopoe passes under the names of "Dreckvogel" (Baden?, Bavaria), "Dröckstöchar" (Tyrol, Sarntal), "Ful-piper" (Altmark), "Kothahn," "Kothühnel" (listed at the beginning of the sixteenth century; Strassburg, Palatinate, Switzerland, Alsatia), "Kotkrämer" ("Dreckkrämer"), "Misthahn" (Mark Brandenburg), "Mistvogel" (Bavaria), "Puphahn" (Alsatia; perhaps onomatopoeic), "Puuposs," "Puupweehopp," "Puvagel" (these three North German?), "Schi(e)sshöferich" (Hessia), "Schissdreckvogel" (Alsatia), "Stenkhupp" (North Germany?), "Stinker" (Bavaria), "Stinkhahn" (Alsatia), "Wutthahn" (North Germany?).

All these names--provincial and dialectal, to be sure--connect the hoopoe with dirt, dung, excrements, and stench, and make it out to be an unclean bird.<sup>5</sup> Yet even when the hoopoe is

<sup>1</sup>Suolahti, pp. 13 and 15.

<sup>2</sup>E. Rolland, Faune populaire de la France, II (1879), 102. W. Gottschalk, Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der französischen Sprache, I (Heidelberg, 1930), 88.

<sup>3</sup>Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI, 206; Rolland, II, 102 f. L. A. J. W. Sloet, De Dieren, p. 238.

<sup>4</sup>Suolahti, p. 14; Brøndum-Nielsen, De Gamle Danske Dyrerim (Copenhagen, 1908), pp. 107 f.

<sup>5</sup>Suolahti, p. 14; Wossidlo, II, 1, p. 362; E. E. Martin and H. Lienhart, Wörterbuch der elsässischen Mundarten, I (Strass-

called by its "standard" name, it is often described as an unclean, unsavory bird. Sometimes the reference to the hoopoe contains only a brief statement, an epithet, to the effect that it is a filthy bird; sometimes a more or less detailed etiologial account is given, explaining the genesis of its coprolitic habits and scatophagous manners; again, a knowledge of the cause of its offensive odor is presupposed and hence there are only allusions to an etiologial account.

Popular belief in the hoopoe's habits and traits of uncleanliness is practically coexistent with the geographical occurrence of the bird. On the other hand, it must be admitted that in some sections of Europe, especially in the South, the hoopoe is not known as a filthy bird but is killed, eaten, and considered a delicacy. This is evidently due to ignorance of its nesting and feeding habits, as the hoopoe only touches this territory on its migratory flight across the Mediterranean. Hence, the views of these South-Europeans are plainly an exception. As a rule, the hoopoe is among the fowls of the air what the skunk is among the beasts of the field.

This bad reputation of the hoopoe is recorded as early as the Pentateuch. It is a part of the ornithological lore of to-day. It is true, of course, that, speaking of the Old World in general and of Germany in particular, the rise of industrialization and the growing importance of urban centers has caused the hoopoe to share the fate of Joseph (Exodus 1: 8)--for most people it has ceased to be a living reality and has become, at best, a name only. And yet I hope to be able to show that the hoopoe, though it be dead to most of us, lives on anonymously in the oft-quoted proverb: It is an evil bird that fouls its own nest.

On the following pages I have brought together a motley array of testimony to the effect that the hoopoe is a filthy bird. I cite first the extra-German, then the German passages, arranging them, wherever possible and convenient, chronologically. A certain amount of overlapping is unavoidable.

The oldest reference to the filthiness of the hoopoe seems to be in the list of birds of abomination, found in

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burg, 1899), 101, 340 f.; Frommann, Die deutschen Mundarten, IV, 56; Heckscher, p. 443, note 54; Danneil, p. 261. Z.f.dt.Mundarten (1910), 361; Bayerische Hefte für Volkskunde, II (1915), Heft 2/3, p. 145.

Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Here, in verses 19 and 18 respectively, the דּוֹחִיפָּחַת (dūkhīphath; "hoopoe") is mentioned as one of a number of birds whose flesh must not be eaten. The Hebrews were evidently familiar with the unsavory propensities of the hoopoe. The fact that the hoopoe was considered sacred by the idolatrous Egyptians<sup>1</sup> may have been an additional reason for tabooing it. The biblical injunction concerning the hoopoe was naturally heeded by the Israelites during their sojourn in Palestine and also afterwards in the diaspora, as evidenced by stories and allusions, especially in the haggadic writings.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising that the Arabs share this view. The seemingly contradictory notion that the "hudhud" (hoopoe) is surrounded by an odor of sanctity, does not prevent the Arabian nomad from voicing his dislike of the noisome smell of this bird.<sup>3</sup>

The oldest allusion in Greek literature to the putrid emanations of the hoopoe seems to be the passage in Aristophanes' Birds (vs. 641), where the Ίρωψ invites Peisthetairos and Euelpides urgently to enter its nest:

ἰς ἐλπίδα τ' ἰς νοτίον τε, τὴν ἐμὴν  
καὶ λαὰ καὶ κάρφη καὶ τὰ παρόντα φύγγνα.  
step into my nest  
and into my pieces of straw  
and the twigs that are here.

Goethe's adaptation of this play, his delightful little literary satire Die Vögel. Nach dem Aristophanes (1780)--a sort of pre-Tieckian Gestiefelter Kater--preserves this very point, viz. the allusion to the feter of the hoopoe. For besides the bird-call "Houp! Houp!" (this in spite of the substitution of the "Schuhu" = owl for the "Wiedehopf" as leading bird character), there occurs this line: "O ja, er gleicht dem Wiedehopf; denn er macht sein Nest aus Quark," and that truly Rabelaisian expression: "Ich bin....der grosse Hosenkackerling, Epops maximus polycacaro-

<sup>1</sup>See chap. iii on filial piety, pp. 24 f. above.

<sup>2</sup>Grünbaum; Z.d.dt.morgenl.Ges., XXXI (1877), 206 (where the story concerning Rabbi Simon and the דּוֹחִיפָּחַת, "dieser unreine unreinliche Vogel" is quoted from Cassel's "Schamir", 313; Thompson, Glossary, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup>Grünbaum, pp. 313 f.

merdicus."<sup>1</sup>

Aristotle lists what is evidently the then current scientific explanation of the hoopoe's bad smell: ὁ δ' ἄτοψ τὴν κοιλίαν μάλιστα ποιεῖται ἐκ τῆς ἀνθρώπινης κόπρου. This tradition, viz. that the hoopoe constructs its nest preferably from human excrements, is repeated and amplified by Aelian: ὅτις τοῦ μὲν προσεῖναι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀντὶ τῶν τοῦ βρεφιστοῦ οἴδε (- ἔτορις) ἀντὶ τοῦ τηλοῦ χροῖναι τὰς καλίας, ἀποτάτημα ἀνθρώπων τριβαλόντες, τῇ δυσωδίᾳ τε καὶ κακοσμίᾳ ἀνιερρόντες καὶ ἀναστρέλλοντες τὸ ζῶον τὸ ἐαυτοῦς πολέμιον, in order to make it impossible for humans to approach their young ones the hoopoes besmear their nests with a layer of human dung instead of using mud; thus, by foul odor and by mephitic stench, they keep away and prevent from approaching the animal that is hostile to them.<sup>2</sup>

Among the Romans, Pliny calls the hoopoe "obscoena avis."<sup>3</sup> Due to its well-known stercoreaceous inclinations, it was elevated, some hold, to a sort of patron saint of manuring. This view, entertained by Jordan-Preller in *Römische Mythologie*, I, p. 375, does not, as far as I am aware of it, rest on any direct evidence. It seems to be based on the story of Pilumnus and Picumnus or Sterculinius (Sterquilin [4] us, Sterculus, Stercutus, Stercutius), who are said to have been gods and of whom Picumnus is credited with the invention of fertilizing fields by means of manure. The hoopoe's foul smell seems to have suggested a connection with this noble pair of brothers.<sup>4</sup>

In post-classical times, the hoopoe continues to be known as an unclean bird. This is obviously due to one, or to a combination of two or all three of the following reasons: (1) influ-

<sup>1</sup>Thompson, p. 55; Goethe, "Die Vögel," in *Werke*, ed. Fr. Strehlke, VIII, 380, 386.

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle, *περὶ ζῴων ἱστορίας*, IX, 15, 616b (ed. J. G. Schneider, Leipzig, 1811, I, 433); Aelian, *περὶ ζῴων ἰδιότητος*, III, 26 (ed. F. Jacobs, Jena, 1832, p. 63); Thompson, *Glossary*, p. 55; see below, the modern French account which attributes the hoopoe's habit of building its nest of excrements to the desire to protect its young from the rapacity of treasure-hunting humans.

<sup>3</sup>*Hist. Nat.*, X, 44, 1 (ed. J. Sillig, I, 218).

<sup>4</sup>Servius Honoratus (4th cent. A.D.), in his commentary on Vergil, *Aen.*, 9, 4: "fratres fuerunt dii; horum Pitumnus usum stercoreandorum invenit agrorum." E. Oder, "Der Wiedehopf in der griech. Sage," *Rhein. Museum*, N.F. XLIII (1888), 556 (quotes Jordan-Preller); Thompson, *Glossary*, p. 56; cf. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, pp. 303 f. (Picus and Pilumnus).



ence of the injunctions in the Pentateuch, (2) survival of the classical tradition, (3) personal knowledge of the nesting and feeding habits of the hoopoe which, as dictionaries and encyclopedias and ornithological treatises testify, are indeed filthy and noisome. The modern consensus concerning the nesting habits seems to be that the mother-bird, while sitting on the eggs, uses the nest as a latrine and that, after the young birds are hatched, their excrements are added to those of the mother and that, consequently, flies are attracted and an aura of putrefaction clings to the nest and its inhabitants. In other words, it is not human filth, but their own dung which causes the stench universally associated with the hoopoe. As another explanation of or as a contributing factor for the pungent and vile odor of the hoopoe and its nest one finds mentioned the secretions of the tail glands of the bird.<sup>1</sup>

The learned author of the Vulgate, St. Jerome, no doubt considered the hoopoe a filthy bird because of his familiarity with the Mosaic writings and because of his acquaintance with classical literature.<sup>2</sup> For similar reasons, and because in his time there must have existed already a "Christian" tradition, drawing by means of the "symbolical" and "allegorical" method certain morals from the filthy traits of the hoopoe, just as there was one exploiting its "filial piety," Rabanus Maurus (d. 856) says of the hoopoe:

Upupam Graeci appellant eo quod stercora humana considerat et fetenti pascatur fimo, avis spurcissima...semper in sepulcris et humano stercore commorans, haec avis sceleratos peccatores significat, scilicet quia sordibus (filth) peccatorum assidue delectantur (v.l: Haec avis sceleratos et peccatores homines significat, qui sordibus peccatorum immorari assidue delectantur).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g. Brehms Tierleben<sup>3</sup>, ed. Pechuel-Loesche, Vögel, II (Leipzig-Vienna, 1891), 31, 33. Pauly-Wissowa, Realencykl., VI (1909), col. 247. Raoul von Dombrowski, Allgemeine Encyklopädie der gesamten Forst- und Jagdwissenschaften, VIII (Vienna-Leipzig, 1894), 390. Wilhelm Medicus, Die Naturgeschichte nach Wort und Spruch des Volkes (Nördlingen, 1867), p. 203. Aristotle, Ἡ φύσις τῶν ζῴων, ed. J. G. Schneider, II, 109; ed. Aubert-Wimmer, I, 91. Aelian, de natura animalium, ed. F. Jacobs, II, 117; Swainson, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Grünbaum.

<sup>3</sup>Op. II. De universo lib. VIII, in: Migne, Patrologia Latina, CXI, col. 252.



The famous medieval collection of fables that goes under the name of Odonis de Ceritonia Fabulae (ca. 1200 A.D.) contains a good example of this sort of moralizing interpretation:

De uppupa et philomena.--Contra injuriosos et de religiosis qui eos fugiunt. Uppupa, varietate colorum distincta et eximie cristata, dixit Philomenae: Tota nocte cantas, super ramos duros saltas, veni et quiescas in nido meo. Quae acquievit et in nidum Uppupae descendit. Sed stercora fetentia invenit, quod ibi morari non potuit, et avolavit, dicens: Magis volo super duros ramos saltare quam in tali fetore quiescere.

Uppupa, quae in stercoribus nidificat, significat mulierem fornicariam, domicellum luxuriosum, qui quando habet lectos ornatos et suavos [sic!], tamen sub stercore culpae fetidissimos...

<sup>1</sup>L. Hervieux, Les fabulistes latins, II (Paris, 1884), 639, LI (LX); see also above, p. 31, n. 1. The Wolfenbüttel parchment MS, Gudianus 200, written at Bologna in 1326, contains as no. 23 the same fable. Here it is called "contra luxuriosos." The moral is slightly longer than the one quoted above: "Vpupa, que in stercoribus nidificat ornata diuersis coloribus, signat mulierem fornicariam, diuitem, luxuriosum qui quandoque habent lectos ornatos et suaues, sed cum stercore culpe fetidissimos... hi (religiosi) magis diligunt super tales ramos exultare, quam in fetore luxuriose computrescere." See H. Osterley, Die Narrationes des Odo de Ciringtonia ("Jahrbuch f. roman. u. engl. Lit.," XII, Leipzig, 1871), p. 141. A similar interpretation is preserved in the Bestiario moralizzato (2nd half of 13th cent.), no. 48:

La lupica...de sterco è nata e in esso vive e muore,/ de quello cibo piglia nutrimento,/ tale è la natura de lo peccatore./ Adorna si de drappi de colore / dentro è fetidissimo e puzzolento.

See Goldstaub-Wendrin, pp. 190, n. 378, where the Breviloquium animi cuiuslibet Religiosi reformativum of Joh. Institoris is quoted; the filthy habit of the hoopoe is used to point a moral against those monks "qui inhoneste cogitando et immunde ac superbe agendo totam suam conversationem, tanquam cum stercore, deturpant."

This kind of moralizing is also responsible for the medieval Tiersprüche, sayings composed by clerics and put into the mouths of animals, originally perhaps written beneath or beside pictures of animals representing virtues and vices. W. Seelmann and, especially, W. Stammer have called attention to some Middle Low German Tiersprüche from the fifteenth century, in Jahrb. d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprechforschung, XLV (1919), 31-35. One of them, following the representation of "Intemperantia" and "Temperancia," is spoken by the wedehoppe, who signifies "Insensibilitätas":

Wedder redelicheit unde des mynschen art  
Vormyd ik des lides lust unde wolvart.

A similar moralizing interpretation of the hoopoe as filthy, then as a bad bird, may be responsible for its use in passages like the following:

1. Meister Boppe (ca. 1275-1287)  
Hoert ir'z, her esel, her dunkelguot, her erennidink,  
her galgenswenkel, wend ir wars, her niemansvriunt,

A short time before, St. Hildegard (d. 1179 or 1180) is a witness to the medieval belief in the dirtiness of the hoopoe:

...de vedehoppo:... immundam naturam habet, et ideo semper in sordibus ac circa sordes versatur, et in eis proficit, et ideo quaerit sordes, quae fortissimae sunt, et in eis mansionem suam parat.<sup>1</sup>

Eventually the hoopoe achieves the distinction of being accorded mention by the eminent writer Albertus Magnus (d. 1280). Listing it as a dirty bird he, so to speak, adds the lustre of his name to the traditions and observations concerning this bird: the hoopoe has not only, but is now become known throughout Christendom as a dung bird. Aristotle and Albertus Magnus, one the most highly esteemed naturalist of the pre-Christian era, and the other one of the most revered polyhistor of the Catholic Middle Ages, both have spoken.

Quam nos upupam vocamus, ex industria naturali materiam nido suo congruam colligit, stercus hominis, quia virtutem quamdam habet theriacae, contra venenum, et<sup>2</sup>est medicina sibi contra venenum, sicut et leopardo et leoni.

her glidink,  
ir sit wol des wit(e)hopfen genoz,  
In gebristet an rehter kunst, an eren und anmuote.  
(MSH, II, 384a)

2. Hugo von Trimberg, Der Renner (ca. 1300)  
Swer trinket biz im die widehopfen  
In dem hirne beginnent klopfen.  
(In facsimile-reprint of the 1833 edition of the Histor. Verein Bamberg [Berlin, 1904], lines 9474 f. = ed. G. Ehrismann, "Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," CXXLVIII, pp. 4-5, lines 9515 f.; cf. Max Steidel, Die Zecher- und Schlemmerlieder im deutschen Volksliede bis zum dreissigjährigen Kriege Diss., Heidelberg, 1914, p. 4.)

On the other hand, Trimberg, in warning against alcoholic excesses, may mention the "knocking" of the hoopoe merely because of the fact that the hoopoe frequently nests in tree-holes; cf. H. Sachs: "Der Bauernknecht fiel zweimal in den Brunnen" (Spruchgedicht, January 6, 1560):

Also ich opfel as,  
Thet also mit mein stiffein klopfen,  
Wie in ain paumen die widhopffen.

See J. Sahr's note to this passage in "Sammlung Göschen," no. 24 (1920), p. 130.

<sup>1</sup>Physica Lib. VI. de avibus, chap. xlvii, in Migne, Patr. Lat., CXCVII, 1305.

<sup>2</sup>Albertus Magnus, de anim. Lib. VIII, tr. 2, chap. 4, p. 255, quoted in J. G. F. Franzius' edition of Pliny's Hist. Nat. (Leipzig, 1781), p. 92.

I cite two more passages to illustrate the medieval Latin tradition. The Codices membranacei Augienses LXXXVIII-XL (Karlsruhe, 13th-14th cent., originally from near Lake Constance) contain this statement:

Upupa avis est que wlgariter dicitur withophe. hec avis de stercore hominis construit nidum, et ideo cum iuuenis est fetet.<sup>1</sup>

The Breslau-Lüben MS of the Proverbia Fridanci Sermons (1459) lists the proverb "Est avis ingrata, que defedat sua strata" and adds "Talis est upupa, per quam significantur fornicarii et adulteri."<sup>2</sup>

And finally two passages from the end of the sixteenth century from the pen of Johannes Ravisius Textor: "Epops avicula est sordida" and "Upupa...semper commoratur in fimo."<sup>3</sup>

These Latin citations show, I trust, that the hoopoe as filthy bird tradition was firmly established in medieval Europe and that in the hands of the clerks the hoopoe had become at least one of the types of the ungodly who delight in dwelling in the mire of their evil deeds.<sup>4</sup>

The following passages, taken from vernacular sources, furnish additional proof for this assumption. They are gathered from medieval and modern authors and collections.

FRANCE. Guillaume le Clerk (13th cent.):

La hupe est un oisel vilein:  
Son ni n'est pas corteis (courteous, höfisch) ne sein,  
Ainz est fet de tai e d'ordure.<sup>5</sup>

Les Ditz des Bestes et des Oyseaux (15th-16th cent.):

La huppe  
Manger si [je] ne veulx qu'ordure,  
Car en puenaisie me tiens;  
Se je suis de belle figure;  
Beaulté sans bonté ne vault riens.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Z. f. dt. Wortforschung, V (1903-04), 19.

<sup>2</sup>J. Klapper, Die Sprichwörter der Freidankpredigten ("Wort und Brauch," XVI, Breslau, 1927), p. 79, no. 425.

<sup>3</sup>Theatrum Poeticum (Basel, 1600), pp. 987, 999.

<sup>4</sup>G. C. Druce, The Mediaeval Bestiaries, p. 81.

<sup>5</sup>Le Bestiaire. Das Tierbuch des normannischen Dichters Guillaume le Clerk, ed. R. Reinsch ("Altfranz. Textbibl.," XIV, Leipzig, 1892), vss. 821-23.

<sup>6</sup>A. de Montaiglon, Recueil... (Paris, 1855), I, p. 263.  
See also:

An ascetic writer of the sixteenth century:

Le Diable fait comme la Houppe bastissant son nid en tout ordure et infection.<sup>1</sup>

Two "old" French lines:

Dédans un creux (cavity) avec fange (mire) et ordure  
La huppe fais ses œufs et sa maison.<sup>2</sup>

Two etiological accounts offer explanations for the hoopoe's alleged custom of building its nest with excrements:

Formerly the hoopoe used to build a very beautiful nest. The walls were inlaid with silver coins (?). But men were rapacious, hunted up the nests and destroyed them, in order to win the money. In order to ward off the robbers who allowed it no moment of peace, the hoopoe from now on used dung instead. And ever since it is building its nest without being disturbed.<sup>3</sup>

Noah was telling the birds how to build their nests. The hoopoe, being a shy bird, was standing over to one side. So it happened that Noah overlooked it. Thereupon the hoopoe took courage and asked which materials it should employ. "Use gold," said Noah. The hoopoe did not understand him and repeated the question. Noah said: "Use silver!" Again the hoopoe did not understand and repeated the question.<sup>4</sup> Thereupon Noah became impatient and answered: "Use dirt!"

Miscellaneous: Human excrements or such of animals (cows, pigs, dogs)--"mon nid est fait de marde de chen et de loup" (Pineau, p. 518)--are specified as building materials. The song of the hoopoe is interpreted to mean: "mon nid pute" (stinks; Haute Bretagne); "Puput, puput, puput / Jhe seu bèle, mais mon nid put!" (Charante, Western France; Saintonge, now Charente Inférieure); the male hoopoe cries "boute, boute!" and the female answers "fi

La Huppe

Menges ne veulz rien que ordure  
Car en pugnaisie metiens  
Se ie suys de belle figure  
Beaute sand bonte ne vault ries.

Early 16th cent., Châlons sur Marne, from "Les Dictz des Oyseaux et des Bestes," Le Bibliophile Belge, I (Brussels, 1866), 8.

<sup>1</sup> Les six livres de similitudes tirées de toutes sortes d'animaux (Paris, 1577), p. 39, cited by Paul Sébillot, Le Folk-Lore de France, III (Paris, 1906), 171.

<sup>2</sup> Penny Cyclopaedia, XXVI, 35, in Charles Swainson, Provincial Names and Folklore of British Birds (London, 1885), pp. 106 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Dähnhardt, I, 327.

<sup>4</sup> Sébillot, III, 171 (Franche Comté) = Rolland, Faune populaire, II, 103. Pineau, Folklore du Poitou, p. 518. Dähnhardt, I, 328. Cf. below under Rumania.

qui put!" Expressions like the following assume that the hoopoe is a filthy bird: "Sale comme une hoppe"; "sale comme une oupotte"; "puer comme une huppe." "Popue" is a dialectal word (in Troyes) for a slattern and a slut. It has even been suggested that "salope" (sloppy, untidy, slut) is originally "sale huppe" (filthy hoopoe).<sup>1</sup>

ITALY. Cf. above: Bestiario moralizzato (2nd half of 13th cent.).

RUMANIA. Marianu lists two etiological accounts, similar to the second one given under FRANCE.

One answers the question: Why does the hoopoe feed on droppings? with: because of its greed.

God ordained the hoopoe to eat millet seed (Maisbrot). The bird was not satisfied with it. God changed its food to barley grains or to wheat ("since they did not have rye bread at that time"). The hoopoe voiced its dissatisfaction once more, and this time God became angry: If you are dissatisfied with even the best food in the world, very well, from now on feed on droppings (dirt). And so it happened.

The other one tells of the hoopoe's dissatisfaction with its nest. It was made of beautiful flowers, or in sweet-smelling bushes and flowering trees. God punishes the bird by ordering it to use anything but what is clean and sweet-smelling, i.e. dirt and excrements.<sup>2</sup>

In the Rumanian version of Grimm, Kinder- und Hausmärchen, no. 19 (the fisherman and his wife), the tree or God changes the ungrateful husband into the cuckoo and the ungrateful wife into the hoopoe. And the hoopoe now feeds on the meanest and most contemptible things and builds its nest of the same material. And this answers the question: why is the hoopoe such a dirty bird?<sup>3</sup>

The Aramáni-story, related above in Chapter IV (pp. 32 ff.) explains the love of these people for the dirty hoopoe.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sébillot, III, 171 (with additional references). Rolland, II, 102 f. Wossidlo, II, 1, pp. 133 f. W. Gottschalk, Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der französischen Sprache, I (Heidelberg, 1930), 88.

<sup>2</sup>Marianu, Ornithologia, II, 157. M. Gaster, Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories (London, 1915), no. XLI, p. 160; cf. Dähnhardt, III, 1, p. 176; I, 328.

<sup>3</sup>Marianu, II, pp. 159, 169, 8 (= Revue des trad. pop., VIII, 41). Gaster, no. XLIII, pp. 162-67. Cf. Bolte-Polívka, I, 145.

<sup>4</sup>Gaster, pp. 288 f.



BUKOWINA and TRANSYLVANIA. "Der Wiedehopf stinkt, doch denkt er, dass sein Nest stinke."<sup>1</sup>

CARNIOLA (KRAIN). "Smrdi ko (v)dab" (smrdokavra), meaning "Er stinkt wie ein Wiedehopf."<sup>2</sup>

LUSATIA.

Den Züchtjungfern bringt zu trinken  
Wiedehopf, das grosse Licht,  
Doch weil's pflegt um ihn zu stinken  
Woll'n sie mit ihm tanzen nicht.<sup>3</sup>

ENGLAND. "The lapwing ("hoopoe") eateth man's dirt; for it is a bird most filthy and unclean...and dwelleth always in graves or in dirt."<sup>4</sup>

The fact that the hoopoe does not occur more frequently as a "filthy bird" in England is no doubt explained by its paucity, as was pointed out in Chapter IV (see above, p. 39, n. 2).

This completes the non-German passages testifying to the filthiness of the hoopoe. The German passages that follow include some that are not German, as far as language employed is concerned. All were written, however, by Germans in the German-speaking territory of Europe and, taken all in all, they should paint a rather accurate picture of what the Germans thought and think of their hoopoe.

Heinrich von dem Türlin, Die Cröne (ca. 1215-20):

.....der galander (Kalandlerlerche, alauda calandra)  
Der hât ein tugent ander  
Denne der witehopfe  
Ze zagel und ze kopfe.

The expression "ze zagel" is, most probably, an allusion to that habit of the hoopoe which is described in a less refined manner in the following passage.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Heinrich von Wlislöck, Märchen und Sagen der Bukowinaer und Siebenbürger Armenier (Hamburg, 1891), p. 176, under "Sprichwörter."

<sup>2</sup>Johannes Kostial, "Zur Krainer Volkskunde," Z.f.österr. Vkunde, XII (1906), 219.

<sup>3</sup>Haupt-Schmaler, Volkslieder der Wenden in der Ober-und Niederlausitz (Grimma, 1841), pt. I, pp. 256-59, no. CCLXXIII, stanza 10 = O. Schöne, "Die Vogelhochzeit in der Oberlausitz," Oberlausitzer Heimszeitung, 2, 15 f.

<sup>4</sup>Bartholomaeus de proprietatibus rerum (London, 1535), Bk. XII, chap. 37: "stercora humana comedit et frequento fimo nutriatur...semper in sepulchris commorans vel in fimo."

<sup>5</sup>Die Cröne, ed. G. H. F. Scholl ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.", XXVII [Stuttgart, 1852]), 78, lines 6304-6307.



Der Stricker (ca. 1230): "Withopfe" says to his uncle,  
the "gouch" (cuckoo):

ein laster ist mir angeborn,  
ez si mir leit ode zorn,  
daz ich min eigen nest betuo  
beidiu spät unde fruo...<sup>1</sup>

Albertus Magnus, the famous German scholastic theologian  
(d. 1280): see above, p. 48.

Codices membranacei Augienses LXXXVIII XC: see above,  
p. 49.

Konrad von Meigenberg (14th cent.), influenced by Albert  
the Great:

... der widhopf ... wan ez ist ain unrain vogel. er nistet  
in unrainigkait und verunraint auch sein aigen nest.<sup>2</sup>

Vogelsprache (14th cent.):

Die hoppe zeyt:  
Here mich dunket dat beste  
Onreyn te zin bewiset min neste.<sup>3</sup>

widhopf: herr, tu nach meinem rot,  
lang slaff in deinem kot.<sup>4</sup>

Der dère rât (beginning of 15th cent.):

wedehoppe: Sêt, hère, in min nest:  
unrênichêt is aller best.<sup>5</sup>

Muskatblüt (first half of 15th cent.), vss. 76,60 ff.:

Duostu selbe in din eigen nest  
Du glichest wol dem wedehoppen,  
Wa du dan sitztest ader stest,  
Darin so muostu knoppen.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>K. Goedeke, Deutsche Dichtung im Mittelalter, p. 642a.  
Cf. above, chap. iv, end of note 1 A, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Ed. Pfeiffer, p. 228.

<sup>3</sup>Haager (Hulthem) MS = no. 5 of Seelmann's List.

<sup>4</sup>Karl Bartsch, Die Erlösung mit einer Auswahl geistlicher Dichtungen ("Bibl. der gesamten dt. National-Literatur von der ältesten bis auf die neuere Zeit," XXXVII, Quedlinburg and Leipzig, 1888), p. xliv.

<sup>5</sup>Paul Jacob Bruns (ed.), Romantische und andere Gedichte in Altplattdeutscher Sprache aus einer Hs. der Akad. Bibl. zu Helmstadt (Berlin and Stettin, 1798), pp. 135-40, with addition on pp. 376-78. This is the same as "Wolfenbüttel-Helmstädter Sammlung," published in K. Goedeke, Deutsche Dicht. im Mittelalter, Book XII (ed. by H. Oesterley), pp. 1v and 25. Cf. also Der Dère Rât, ed. L. E. Ettmüller ("Bibl. der ges. dt. Nat.-Lit," XXXIII), p. 66. This is no. 6 of Seelmann's List.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted from E. v. Groote edition, Cologne, 1852, in Borchardt-Wüstmann-Schoppe, Die sprichwörtlichen Redensarten im deutschen Volksmunde nach Sinn und Ursprung erläutert (6th ed., Leipzig, 1925), p. 344.

Breslau-Lüben MS of Proverbia Fridanki (1459): see above,  
p. 49.

Vogelsprache (15th cent.):

Der Widehopf

Herre, du maht prüfen an mime nest,  
unreine sin dunket mich daz best  
und dar zuo üppige zuo sin,  
daz rüret zuo gewin,  
als es mir ouch wol an stot,  
min hus buwe ich mit kot.<sup>1</sup>

Der Widhopf

Sih, herre, an mein nest!  
unflat dünk mich das best.  
also halt, herre, das haus dein,  
als ich tuo das nest mein,  
so kümpf niemant gern zuo dir,  
als die andern vogel zuo mir.<sup>2</sup>

Vogelsprache (ca. 1500):

Der wedehoppe

Ick byn een vogel schone,  
Ick drage vp mijnem houede ene kronen;  
Mer see an mijn nest,  
Unreynicheit duncket mij best;  
Men kan mij nicht verwijten,  
Men dat ick in mijn egen nest schijte.<sup>3</sup>

I am appending here three undated hoopoe-passages. One is a Latin proverb, quoted by J. Eiselein in Die Sprichwörter und Sinnreden des deutschen Volkes in alter und neuer Zeit, Freiburg, 1840: "Turpis avis foedum proprium facit upupa nidum" (621). The other is taken from J. C. Fichard, Frankfurtisches Archiv für ältere deutsche Litteratur und Geschichte, III (1815), 321. The hoopoe does not seem to be mentioned by name, but there can be no doubt that the passage quoted belongs to a Vogelsprache:

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<sup>1</sup>Stuttgart paper MS, cod. phys., fol. no. 30, 203a-d, published by Pfeiffer in "Das Märchen vom Zaunkönig," Germania, VI (1861), 86. Cf. ibid., 80 and 90: no text is quoted for the widhopffe (wydhopf), but Pfeiffer's note, p. 90, is interesting: "Diese Version ist dadurch von besonderem Interesse, weil sie, bezeichnend genug, in Kaiser Maximilians Stube oder Schlafkammer zu Innsbruck gemalt oder geschrieben war. Nicht unmöglich wäre es, dass die Verse von des Kaisers eigner Hand herrühren." This is no. 12 in Seelmann's List.

<sup>2</sup>Munich MS, Cod. germ. 714, published by Pfeiffer, p. 103. This is no. 13 in Seelmann's List.

<sup>3</sup>Munich, printed s.l.s.a. (ca. 1500). This is no. 2 in Seelmann's List. Published by Seelmann, pp. 138 ff., especially p. 143.

Du solt unküsch leben  
 Unküsch sin das kömet dir eben  
 Es ist alle dy freide min  
 Dar off flisze die sinne din  
 Das sy keiner lost gedencen  
 Und solt es dich wol an eren krenken.

Bis unrein tzu aller frist  
 Du als ich und schisz in din eigen nest  
 Dribe schande und boszheit vill  
 Off setze ist nu der herren spill  
 Fulheit undogent dir wol an statt  
 Dem volge nach das ist min rat.

The third one is from Meisterlieder der Kolmarer Handschrift, edited by Karl Bartsch ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttg.," LXVIII), p. 20:

uppupä...als uns Solinus schribet wie  
 daz er sin schone geschendet,  
 wan er ūz liutes mist sin nest im macht.

The sixteenth century, torn by religious strife, replete with acrimonious invective, and teaming with lusty vituperation, made abundant use of coarse, earthy, redolent expressions and comparisons. This explains, at least in part, the frequent occurrence of the hoopoe in the writings of this period.

Thomas Murner, Die Schelmen Zunft (1512), no. 32:

Der unnütz Vogel  
 (The woodcut shows a crested bird  
 befouling its nest)

Der vogel hat ein böse art,  
 der sein eigen nest nit spart.  
 Sonder er selber scheisst darein,  
 den gschmack doch selber nimmet ein

Der Vogel kan nit sein der best,  
 der scheisset in sein eigen nest.

Das mag ein öder vogel sein,  
 der in sein nest selb scheisset ein,  
 so er doch selber sitzet drein.<sup>1</sup>

Vogelsprache (1518):

No. 7. Des wiethopffen rat

Piss vnrayn herre zw aller frist,  
 Thu alz ich scheys in mein genist,  
 Treyb schant vnd posshait vil,  
 Daz ist yeczund der herren spil,

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from J. Scheible, Das Kloster, I, 866 f. This is a reprint of the 1567 edition. The bird is not named. However, the crested bird of the illustration is the *avis cristata*, the hoopoe. Murner refers to this passage by "Vnnütz vogel" in his recapitulation of the Schelmen Zunft, *ibid.*, p. 896.

Vnd welich das nun wol kan,  
Den helt man fur ainen weysen man.<sup>1</sup>

Sebastian Franck, Sprichwörter, Frankfurt a.M., 1541:  
"in sein eigen nest hofieren wie ein widhopf."<sup>2</sup>

Low German Vogelsprache (1541):

65. De wedehoppe

Ick bin [ein] voghel ghar schone  
Und draghe uppe mynem havede eyne krone,  
Me kan my anders nycht vorwyten,  
Men dat ick myn eghene nest besplyte.<sup>3</sup>

Burchard Waldis, Esopus (1548): "Der widhopf must das  
scheiszhauz fegen."<sup>4</sup> "Von der Wiedhopffen:

...die stinckend Wydehopff  
Liszt nimmer guts in jren kropff;  
Wie ein Saw wület stets im kath.<sup>5</sup>

Strassburger Vogelgedicht (1554):

Den man sunst nennet ein Widhopff/  
Der ist ein schelm vnd gar ein tropff.  
Sein eygen näst müsz beschissen sein/  
Er trüg den kot eh selber drein.<sup>6</sup>

Jakob Frey, Gartengesellschaft (1556): "stanck wie ein  
widhopff."<sup>7</sup>

Schumann's Nachtbüchlein (1559): "er thet gleich wie ein  
widhopff, der scheyszt im selber in sein nest und ligt oder setzt  
sich selbs darein."<sup>8</sup>

Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof, Wendunmuth (1563): "der widhopff  
... welches nest oder wohnung daheim nichts denn dreck, und darvon

<sup>1</sup>Vienna MS, 1518. This is no. 11 of Seelmann's List, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup>II, 56b, in Deutsches Wörterbuch, col. 623, s.v. nest; quoted as Franck II, 50b by Wander, Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon, III (Leipzig, 1873), s.v. Nest, 69. Wander adds references.

<sup>3</sup>Stockholm MS. This is no. 1 in Seelmann's List, p. 135.

<sup>4</sup>Das ander Buch, no. 27, line 42, ed. J. Tittmann, I, 192; ed. H. Kurz, I, 197.

<sup>5</sup>Das ander Buch, no. 76, lines 11-13, ed. Tittmann, I, 261; ed. H. Kurz, I, 266 f.

<sup>6</sup>Ein kurtzweilig gedicht/ von namen/ art vnd natur aller vögel (Strassburg, 1554), lines 555 ff., in Suolahti, p. 462.

<sup>7</sup>Ed. J. Bolte, p. 92, line 31.

<sup>8</sup>Ed. J. Bolte, p. 229, lines 9 ff.

übergehe."

Mancher ist aussen reich und gleist,  
Und wie ein kröt im ham sich spreist,  
Doch ins nest wie ein widhopff schmeist.<sup>1</sup>

Two passages from Luther and two from Hans Sachs may be inserted here:

Luther: "Detractor itaque circumfert, molit et habitat in stercoribus sicut upupa semper olfatiens, ut si quis videret aliquem se stercore foedantem, diceret: Sehet, wie hatt sich der beschiszen. Cui optime respondetur: Das frisz. Quia [vere] comedit talia."<sup>2</sup>

"Bei den rechten Christen nichts Verachters ist, denn der Papst mit alle seinen München und Pfaffen. Er stinket wie ein Wiedehopfnest bei ihnen und wird auch je länger je<sup>3</sup>mehr stinken auch bei denen, die ihn itzt noch hoch achten!"

Hans Sachs: Als sich der spieler rüren thet,  
Hett er ihm selber in sein bet  
Einen wid hopffen auszgeheckt,<sup>4</sup>  
Ihm selbs ein ay dorein geleck.<sup>4</sup>

Gartner, Proverbialia Dictoria (1566-1598): "Turpis avis spurcum proprium facit upupa lectum."<sup>5</sup>

Johannes Nas(us) (d. 1590): "Thetelt in sein eigens nest, wie ein Withopf."<sup>6</sup>

Georg Rollenhagen, Froschmeuseler (ca. 1600):

...ein wiedehopf;  
sein art nicht lēst,  
tut in sein nest.<sup>7</sup>

Eucharius Eyerling (d. 1597):

Sein vater sey ein widhopff gevest,<sup>8</sup>  
denn er scheiss in seyn eigen nest.

<sup>1</sup>Ed. H. Österley ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," XCVIII [1869]), pp. 283 f. (VII, 60).

<sup>2</sup>Weimar edition, IV, 681, 27. E. Thiele, Luthers Sprichwörterammlung (Weimar, 1900), p. 166.

<sup>3</sup>Weimar ed., XXXVI, 81, 139. Thiele, p. 318.

<sup>4</sup>"Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," IX, 301, 17 ff. Quoted by C. H. Handschin, "Das Sprichwort bei Hans Sachs: I. Teil, Verz. der Sprichwörter," Bulletin of the Univ. of Wisconsin, III (1904-07), 146. See also Bade-lied by Hans Sachs in Schnorr von Carolsfeld, Zur Geschichte des deutschen Meistergesangs (Berlin, 1872), p. 56: "stincket wie ein widhopffe." The last reference I owe to the kindness of Mr. Fritz Frauchiger.

<sup>5</sup>p. 113. In Suringar, Bebel..., p. 207.

<sup>6</sup>459a. In Wander, III, s.v. Nest, 69.

<sup>7</sup>Ed. K. Goedeke, I, 205, lines 218 f.

<sup>8</sup>Proverbiorum copia, 1601 ff., I, 542 (in Wossidlo, II, 1, pp. 391 f.).

Wolffhart Spangenberg, Gansz-König (1607):

Was? (sagt sie) solt der Widehopff  
Ein König seyn? der lose Tropff/  
Ein stinckender loser Vnflat/<sup>1</sup>  
Der kein Tugent bewiesen hat.

Lehmann (ca. 1650): "Wer in sein eygen Nest hoffiert,  
der liegt im Dreck wie der Wiedhopff."<sup>2</sup>

Das geistliche Vogel-Gesang (ca. 1650):

Der Widhopf ist gar wohl geziert  
Und hat doch ganz kein Stimm;  
Sein Cron er allzeit mit sich führt,  
Ist doch nichts hinder ihm.  
Wie mancher brangt in Kleider,  
Als wann er wär ein Graf:  
Sein Vatter ist ein Schneider,  
Sein Bruder hüt die Schaf.

This strophe does not mention specifically that the hoopoe  
is a filthy bird. However, it does so by implication. See below.<sup>3</sup>

Vogel-Schul (1700):

Mit schönen Federn ist die Widhopff zwar geziert:  
Aber ein' üblen Stand in ihrem Näst sie führt:  
Auss hoch-stinckendem Koth ist, und wird sie gebrütt,  
Bringet auss ihrem Nest auch nichts als Unflath mitt!  
An der Widhopffen kan sich iederman ersehen,  
Und was die Hoffart sey, genügliichen verstehen: 4

A riddle (1732):

Rex fueram, sic crista probat; sed sordida vita  
Immundam e tanto culmine fecit avem.<sup>5</sup>

Vogelhochzeit (middle of 18th cent.):

Die hup liess einen p..., 6  
dass die braut die nase stup.

<sup>1</sup>In Ausgewählte Dichtungen von Wolffhart Spangenberg, ed.  
Ernst Martin (Strassburg, 1887), p. 20, lines 358 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Florilegium Politicum, I-III, 1630-1642, 4 vols. (Frank-  
furt, 1662), 702, 58. In Wander, III, s.v. Nest.

<sup>3</sup>This is no. 17 of Seelmann's List, pp. 103 ff., with ad-  
ditional references.

<sup>4</sup>Breslau (University Library) MS. This is no. 18 of Seel-  
mann's List, p. 116.

<sup>5</sup>This is riddle no. 959 of Oedipodiana seu Sphingis  
aenigmata ... per P. Franciscum à S. Barbara & Scholis Pils  
(Oppau, 1732). The answer is "upupa."

<sup>6</sup>Norrenberg, Beiträge zur Localgeschichte des Niederrheins,  
IV, 102, note.



von Crailsheimsche Liederhandschrift (before 1750):

Lass die Creditores immer klopfen!  
ich verriegle meine Stube wohl,  
der Gestank von solchen Wiedehopfen  
stänkert mir die ganze Nase voll,  
lästern sie gleich durch das ganze Hausz,  
ey der Bursche macht sich gar nichts draus.<sup>1</sup>

Goethe's reference to the hoopoe and its nest, made of "Quark" (1780): see above, p. 44.

E. M. Arndt, Märchen und Jugenderinnerungen (1818), contains the story of the hoopoe who, having become extremely wealthy as a ladies' tailor--see no. 17 of Seelmann's List--succumbs to greed and steals, in order to enrich himself even more, and is punished by God by being changed into the hoopoe. Instead of being surrounded by precious stuffs and rustling silks, the hoopoe is now condemned to frequent barns where it picks up with the same insatiety the vilest things and carries them into its nest.<sup>2</sup>

Arnim, Die Kronenwächter: "Ihr Wiedehopfen, die ihr euer eigen Nest besudelt..."<sup>3</sup>

R. Wossidlo, Mecklenburgische Volksüberlieferungen:

Ich bin der stolze Wiedehopf,  
und trag die krone auf meinem kopf,  
doch sagen die leute, ich stink.

Heff'n töppel up'n kopp, heff'n töppel up'n kopp,  
un likers seggen de lüd', ik stink;  
dat maakt, ik bug' mien huus von minschenschiet,  
dorüm seggen de lüd' ik stink.

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<sup>1</sup>Strophe 2 of a 9-strophe poem = no. 275 of the "von Crailsheimsche Liederhandschrift," in Arthur Kopp, Deutsches Volks- und Studentenlied in vorklassischer Zeit (Berlin, 1899), pp. 221 f. Compare with the strophe above:

Lasset die verdammten Manichäer klopfen,  
Ich verriegle meine Stubentür,  
Denn der Gestank von solchen Wiedehopfen  
Kommt meiner Nase ganz schrecklich für.  
Vor den Ferien zahl' ich niemandem aus  
Nach den Ferien wird erst recht nichts draus.

and  
Der Gestank von solchen Wiedehopfen (= Manichäern)  
kommt mir ganz abscheulich für...

both in Kopp, pp. 222 and 224 respectively. See also Kopp, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup>I, 425 (the first volume appeared in 1818). Cited in Dähnhardt, III, 1, pp. 398 f.

<sup>3</sup>Werke, ed. Monty Jacobs, Die Kronenwächter, II, 279 (published in 1854).

Ik bün de töppelwäd'hopp,  
ik heff de kroon up minen kopp,  
de lüd dee seggen, ik stink;  
ik schiet ehr wat, ik schiet ehr  
nügenmal wat.

Dee maakt dat as de wäd'hopp, dee kackt sik in't eegen  
nest.<sup>1</sup>

Miscellaneous: "Wie ein Wiedehopf stinken"; "Hè stinkt ass'n  
Lupk" (hoopoe);<sup>2</sup> "Der Wiedehopf ist durch seinen Geruch berüch-  
tigt";<sup>3</sup> "He schitt in sien egen Nest as de Kukuksköster" (hoopoe),  
"De Lupk iss'n lägen Voggel, hê beschitt sin eigen Nest."<sup>4</sup>

And, finally, I refer once more to the German names of  
the hoopoe, "Dreckvogel," etc., listed above in this chapter.  
One might add "Ossopüpk," "Ossepuper," "Ochsenpuper," a (Prussian)  
name which perhaps makes the hoopoe out to be a companion of oxen  
on the pasture, a "herdsman" (of. no. 17 of Seelmann's List and  
the herdsman references in Dähnhardt, III, 1, pp. 394 ff.).  
Whether or not the second part of this name signifies excrements  
or has to do with the ability of the hoopoe to arouse tired or  
fallen animals from the ground (see above, Chapter IV), or whether  
"Ossopüpk" and "Ossepuper" are onomatopœic names, I am unable to  
say.<sup>5</sup>

Scientific observation, then, and pseudo-scientific lore,  
the latter based chiefly on biblical and classical tradition,  
makes the hoopoe out to be a filthy bird. The passages quoted so  
far may be roughly divided into two groups: first, such as char-  
acterize the hoopoe as a filthy bird because it eats filth or  
chooses filthy dwelling and feeding places; and, second, such  
passages as describe it as a filthy bird because it befouls its  
nest. It is this latter trait of the hoopoe, that of befouling  
its own nest, which--at least so I like to think--lives on in the  
well-known proverb found practically everywhere in Europe: "It

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<sup>1</sup>III,1, pp. 133 f., nos. 987 a, e, f.; 391 f.

<sup>2</sup>H. Frischbier, "Vergleiche mit Tieren," Korrespondenz-  
blatt d. Ver. f. niederdt. Sprachforschung, III (1878), 54. Mitt. d.  
schles. Ges. f. Vkunde, X (1908), Heft XIX, 94. Danneil, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup>North Thuringia. Z. d. Ver. f. Vkunde, X (1900), 210.

<sup>4</sup>O. Mensing, Schleswig-Holsteinisches Wörterbuch, III  
(1931), col. 362. Danneil, p. 267.

<sup>5</sup>Suolahti, p. 15.

is an ill bird that fouls its own nest." And it is this proverb which engages our attention from now on.

It must be admitted at the outset that the hoopoe's name occurs but rarely in connection with the proverb. Usually the proverb mentions no bird by name. Only in the following instances have I found the hoopoe mentioned specifically as the bird that fouls its nest:

Est avis ingrata, que defedat sua strata. Talis est upupa, per quam significantur fornicarii et adulteri.  
(Breslau-Lüben MS, 1459 A.D.; see above, pp. 49, 54.)

Der Vogel kan nit sein der best,  
der scheisset in sein eigen nest.  
(Thomas Murner, Die Schelmen Zunft 1512; see above, p. 55.  
The hoopoe is not named, but there is an illustration.)

in sein eigen nest hofieren wie ein widhopf.  
(Sebastian Franck, 1541; see above, p. 56.)

Turpis avis spurcum proprium facit upupa lectum.  
(Gartner, Proverbialia Dictoria, publ. 1566-1598; see above, p. 57.)

Turpis avis foedum proprium facit upupa nidum.  
(quoted by Eiselein; see above, p. 54.)

There are a few more examples that might be quoted, but they do not represent the proverb proper with the name of the hoopoe; they might be classified as paraphrases of or allusions to or extensions of the proverb. Even among the five examples given above, only the three Latin ones properly belong.

The ordinary Westeuropean and Northeuropean versions of our proverb do not specify any particular bird as guilty of befouling its nest. The following examples should prove this. I am citing them from such well-known collections as K. F. W. Wander, Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon; Ida von Düringsfeld and Otto von Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, Sprichwörter der Germanischen und Romanischen Sprachen; Joseph Haller, Altspanische Sprichwörter und sprichwörtliche Redensarten aus den Zeiten vor Cervantes. I do not give parallels, nor is an attempt made at completeness. One example for each of the most important languages or peoples involved is sufficient for our present purpose:

Latin: Non est illa valens quae nidum stercoreat ales.

Portuguese: Aquella ave he má, que em seu ninho suja.  
(It is a bad bird that soils its own nest.)

Spanish: Aquella ave es mala: que su nido estraga (o: cága).  
(It is an ill bird that injures ("cacat") its own nest.)

Italian: Cattivo uccello che sporca il suo nido.  
(Bad bird that dirties its own nest.)

French: Cet oiseau est méchant, qui chie en son nid.  
 Dutch: Het is een vuile vogel, die zijn eigen nest ontreinigt.  
 English: It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest.  
 German: Es ist ein böser Vogel, der in sein eigen Nest hofiert.  
 Danish: Det er en slem Fugl, som besmitter sin egen Rede.  
 Swedish: Elak fågel, som sôlar sitt eget näste.  
 Norwegian: D'er ein klen Fugl, som skjemmer sitt eget Reid.

It must also be admitted that the hoopoe is not the only bird that is said to befoul its nest. Tradition and lore accuse other birds of the same misdemeanor. To this class belong monedula (jackdaw, Dohle), busardus, noctua (owl, Nachteule, Käuzchen), bubo ("anglice an howle," eagle-owl, Uhu, Schuhu), scabro (scrabo, scarabo, strabo), onocrotalus (pelican, Kropfgans), le huan (Uhu?), owl, perhaps also the starling, turdus (thrush, Drossel), and the heron (Reiher). The last three are certainly aves cacantes, but whether they befoul their nests is not clear. I am certain that, as far as the turdus is concerned, the reference that connects it with our proverb is based on a misunderstanding. My reason for this opinion as well as the sources for the list of nest-befoulers I shall give below. For the time being, it is enough to remember that these birds are either named in connection with our proverb (bubo and onocrotalus) or are the nest-befoulers in fables on which moralizations are based (especially bubo, busardus, noctua, scabro), or are mentioned or alluded to as sterquilinous birds. It is probable, then, that there was a time when the hoopoe was not the one and only bird whom people had in mind when they quoted our proverb. Any one of the aves cacatrices might have been the bird to whom they were alluding. Note should, however, be taken of the fact that the only two besides the hoopoe, bubo and onocrotalus, are ever connected explicitly with the proverb. In my opinion, these two and the other birds listed above eventually dropped from the ken of the people who were using our proverb, and they understood the bird in question to be the hoopoe, even though they did not mention it specifically. They did not have to mention the hoopoe by name, because the hoopoe, as the names and passages cited in the first part of this chapter indicate, had become in the mind of the folk the one representative filthy bird that befouls its nest.

The next step in the development of our proverb is that not even the hoopoe is thought of any longer when the proverb is quoted, except perhaps in certain rural districts. As has been pointed out before, knowledge of or rather familiarity with birds in general and with the hoopoe in particular is dying out, even in countries where the hoopoe was fairly well known up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Because the hoopoe was never really at home in England--see the beginning of Chapter I--we are not surprised at the non-appearance of its name in the English form of the proverb. But even in Germany the hoopoe is mentioned less and less frequently. It is my impression that it occurs only in such nineteenth and twentieth century writers as are "close to the soil."<sup>1</sup>

This lack of familiarity with the hoopoe is, in part, responsible for the fact that the expression "befoul one's nest" is nowadays used almost exclusively in a figurative sense. To be sure, this figurative interpretation of the proverb is not new. It is as old as the proverb itself, no matter whether the hoopoe or any other nest-befouling bird was the object of the proverb's censure. But there is this difference: formerly there was, I should say even in England, knowledge or at least remembrance of a bird that was wont to bewray its nest, and this known or remembered fact, which clearly had to do with the animal kingdom, was made the occasion for an interpretation which had to do with religion, the home, one's country, etc. Later, however, there was remembered only the interpretation. What at first had been merely the application of something, had then become, if I may exaggerate slightly, the thing itself. And thus, in Germany, it has happened that the proverb is no longer quoted as a matter of course in one or the other of its complete forms: "Es ist ein böser Vogel, der in sein eigen Nest hofiert," rather it has become the custom to allude to it by "Vögel, die ihr eignes Nest beschmutzen," a sophisticated phrase, as shown by its use of the plural "Vögel" instead of the single-minded singular "Vogel," by the substitution of the more refined "beschmutzen" for stronger terms of a more primitive age, and by the omission of the predi-

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<sup>1</sup>E.g. Arnim, *Die Kronenwächter*; see above, p. 59; Anzengruber, *Die Kreuzelschreiber*; see above, p. 5; G. Hauptmann, *Anna, ein ländliches Liebesgedicht*, 14. Gesang, see *Gesammelte Werke in acht Bänden*, VIII, 367.

cate. Incidentally, this development away from the concrete beginning of our proverb is responsible for this chapter, for it tries to answer the question: who or what is the bird that befouls its nest?

According to the various contexts in which the proverb appears, it condemns the following sins or shortcomings: to defile one's bed, i.e. be false to one's wife or husband; to defame one's family; to lack breeding; to offend against the code of one's profession; to be disloyal to one's feudal lord; to be ungrateful; to forsake one's fatherland; to steal from the place where one happens to stay. The passages, substantiating this list, will be given below.

These interpretations could come about rather easily because our proverb provided a place for the convergence of several figurative usages: "nest" has a number of rather obvious figurative meanings, such as "bed," "home," "family," "benefactor," etc.; "bird," aside from assuming the meaning "man," "person," signifies, particularly in German ("Vogel"), membrum virile, just as "vögeln" means coire, futuere; closely connected with "vögeln" (futuere) and "to befoul somebody else's matrimonial bed" is the common expression "to lay eggs in a strange nest," a phrase which is based on a number of fables which illustrate either an especially annoying case of nest-befouling or an extremely telling case of moral turpitude. The last expression, "to lay eggs in a strange nest," involves not so much the hoopoe or any other filthy bird mentioned above, but rather the cuckoo who, in turn, as we know, is intimately associated with the cuckoo's sexton, the Kuckucksküster, i.e. the hoopoe.

The remaining pages of this chapter bring: A, the passages that deal with the other birds that befoul their nests; B, the material that substantiates the various interpretations of our proverb.



A. The Other Birds That Befoul Their Nests

Onocrotalus

Turpe est, quod proprium violas, onocrotale, nidum.<sup>1</sup>

In my opinion, this passage proves only that Amarcus was acquainted with an expression or expressions, possibly in metrical form, that had to do with a bird's befouling its own nest. As a matter of fact, a hexameter--the earliest passage now known, mentioning such a bird--was then in existence for about a quarter of a century. It is Egbert von Lüttich's "nidos commaculans immundus habebitur ales" (see below). It does not follow that the onocrotalus (pelican, Kropfgans) is a filthy nest-befouling bird in the sense in which the hoopoe is such a bird. As far as I know, this would be the only passage so describing this bird. And as far as I am able to interpret the context, the explanation "nest-befouler" in the sense in which the term is used of the hoopoe would not fit. This is the context, beginning with verse 759:

Sed dicit nova lex: in dextram mandibulam te  
Si quis cedat, ei paciens prebeto aliam tu.  
Composite mala vestra satis defenditis acta!  
Turpe est quod proprium violas, onocrotale, nidum.  
Ad defendendum sapientes estis iniquum,  
Ad rectum stulti...

The new law is the law promulgated by Christ (John 13:34). It is the commandment to love one another, to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5: 39), not to insist greedily on one's right. Now the onocrotalus is a greedy bird ("inexplebile animal, mira ut sit capacitas").<sup>2</sup> As a greedy bird, then, it might fit into the context: a Christian, acting as greedily as the onocrotalus, misbehaves. Another explanation is possible. The onocrotalus (pelican) is a symbol of Christ. A Christian, a child of Christ, would be a pelican. The Christian, by acting in an un-Christlike manner, might be said to be befouling his nest. At any rate, Manitius' reference to Martial XI, 22, 10 (the reference should be to XI, 21, 10) in my opinion has nothing to offer. The onocrotalus occurs; that is about all:

<sup>1</sup>Sexti Amarcii Galli Piosistrati, Sermonum Libri IV, ed. M. Manitius (Leipzig, 1888). This line is taken from Book III, 762, p. 71. The Sermones were written after 1046 A.D. The passage is quoted in Seiler, "Deutsche Sprichwörter in mittelalterlicher lateinischer Fassung," Z. f. dt. Ph., XLV (1913), 279; see Traube in A. f. dt. A., XV (1889), 195.

<sup>2</sup>Pliny, Hist. Nat., X, 131.

- (1) Lydia tam laxa est...
- (9) .....quam
- (10) Turpe Ravennatis guttur onocrotali.
- (11) Hanc in piscina dicor futuisse marina.
- (12) Nescio; piscinam me putuisse (futuisse?) puto.<sup>1</sup>

Egbert von Lüttich mentions the concubine (paelex) in the line following the one quoted above; she is the one who "befouls." This may have had something to do with Manilius' referring to the Martial passage.

If one or the other or my explanations of the onocrotalus in Amarcus is acceptable, then it is clear, too, that such an involved, learned allusion would have very little chance to become popular. As a matter of fact, Amarcus alone mentions the onocrotalus in connection with the nest-befouling bird.

It is true, of course, that the onocrotalus is one of the birds of abomination, enumerated in Lev. 11: 13 ff. and Deut. 14: 12 ff. But as such it need not be a nest-befouling bird; it need merely be an unclean bird,<sup>2</sup> provided its Latin name fitted the meter.

In this connection, I should like to call attention to a cave which must be heeded in investigations that have to do with ornithological folklore: identification of birds by means of their names only is uncertain in many cases. It is frequently uncertain when the investigation is restricted to one language. It becomes even less certain when the investigation draws from more than one language. The case of the onocrotalus is a case in point. I have translated onocrotalus with "pelican," "Kropfgans." These translations are by no means certain. Various writers in antiquity, during the Middle Ages, and up into fairly recent times, have at various occasions rendered the Hebrew name of our bird variously: pellicanus, onocrotalus, monedula, bubo, noctua, nycticorax, herodio--to give only the Latin translations. These

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<sup>1</sup>Ed. L. Friedländer, II (Leipzig, 1886), 179. Alexander Berg's translation of this passage reads:

Lydia ist so weit, wie....  
 Und wie der Kropfgans Schlund am ravennatischen Strand.  
 Diese soll ich umarmt an dem Fischteich haben.  
 Ich weiss nicht;  
 Aber ein Fischteich ward, glaub' ich, umarmet von mir.

<sup>2</sup>According to Joachim Camerarius, no. XXXVIII, Horapollo claims that the pelican builds its nest of cow-dung ("nidum in terra constructum ex bubulo stercore"). The onocrotalus and the pelican may be one and the same bird.

"Latin" names, in turn, have been explained variously, thus adding a second element of confusion to an issue which is confused enough from the start. To illustrate: "noctua" is glossed "id̄ quas nocte uolat. id̄ coruus marinus nocturnus. id̄ nahtram. Ț uuila. ut alii uolunt. alii lusciniā uoluerunt esse...id̄ est nahtagala. ...nocticorax ipsa est et noctua qui noctem amat."<sup>1</sup> Reuchlin knew of this confusion. In Rudimenta linguae Hebraicae he wrote of the Hebrew name of the onocrotalus: "avis immundae proprium nomen. quam alii onocrotalum, alii pellicanum, alii monedulam, alii aliter nominant."<sup>2</sup> It would, therefore, be wrong blithely to identify the onocrotalus with the pelican and then to transfer the lore of the pelican to the onocrotalus. The only safe assumption, then, is that Amarius knew the onocrotalus as an avis immunda. He could have inserted the name of any unclean bird, e.g. that of the nycticorax (night-heron, Nachtrabe), of whom the "Physiologus dicit: diligit obscena loca noctycorax ut hyena.... nocticorax immunda avis."<sup>3</sup>

#### Monedula

Restituit pretium nutrita monedula merdam.<sup>4</sup>

The monedula (jackdaw, Dohle, OHG "tah") is here said to befoul the nest. The point, however, is that this bird befouls the nest of its foster-parents. This follows from the use of the expression nutrita (having been nurtured), from the context which mentions the monedula and cuculus together, and from parallel accounts.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Steimeyer-Sievers, Die althochdeutschen Glossen, I (1879), 342.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. the remarks to Psalm 102: 7 and the very instructive footnote in Theodor Pahl, Quellenstudien zu Luthers Psalmenübersetzung (Weimar, 1931), p. 76.

<sup>3</sup>Physiologus MS of the 11th cent. at Göttweig, ed. by G. Heider in Archiv f. Kunde österr. Geschichts-Quellen, V (1850), 577.

<sup>4</sup>Isengrimus, ed. E. Voigt (Halle, 1884), Book IV, line 527. Quoted in F. Seiler, Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde (Munich, 1922), p. 91. Isengrimus was composed 1151-1152 by Magister Nivardus (?). The line occurs in this context:

(525) Nec petit hic standi veniam, nec stare quod ipsum  
Hic patior, grates, quas mihi debet, agit,  
Restituit pretium nutrita monedula merdam,  
Gracculus et cuculo, quem foveat, hoste perit.

Busardus

De busardo et falcone: Busardus in nido falconis projecit ovum suum, et inde creatus est pullus. Alii pulli nobiles fimum fecerunt extra<sup>1</sup> nidum. pullus vero busardi semper maculavit nidum suum....

Noctua

De accipitre et noctua

Il lur respunt, "Vus dites veir.  
Legiere chose est a saveir:  
de l'oeuf les poi jeo bien geter  
a par chalur e par cover,  
mais niënt fors de lur natur."<sup>2</sup>  
Maldite seit tels nurreture!"<sup>2</sup>

Bubo

Bubo (anglice 'an howle') rogavit accipitrem ut pullum suum nutriret et in bonis moribus educaret, quod sibi concedens jussit illum adducere et nido suo inter pullos suos ponere. Cui dixit accipiter quod in omnibus pullis suis conformaret et illorum educacionem adisceret diligenter. Qui respondit se paratum in omnibus suis parere mandatis. Tandem accipiter, pro cibo querendo patriam intravit, et rediens nocte nidum suum turpiter invenit [fedatum]. Querenti sibi quis sic nidum maculavit, responsum est quod pullus bubonis illum fedavit. "A!" dixit accipiter "hyt ys a fowle brydde that fylyzth hys owne nests..."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>One of the fables of Odo de Ciringtonia (ca. 1180 A.D.) in H. Oesterley, "Die Narrationen des Odo de Ciringtonia," *Jahrbuch f. roman. u. engl. Literatur*, IX (1868), 150, no. XXXVIII. A variant of this version is published by Thomas Wright in *A Selection of Latin Stories from Manuscripts of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* ("Percy Society," VIII, London, 1842), p. 52 (fabula de pullo busardi. busardus in nido accipitris...). Compare with this British Museum MS Lat. Harl. 219, containing Odo's fables, published in Léopold Hervieux, *Les fabulistes latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge*, II (Paris, 1884), 601, no. VII (XXVI): "de busardo et accipitre." The same fable is told by John of Sheppey: "Busardus et Accipiter." See Johannis de Schepeya *Fabulae* in Hervieux, II, 774 f. See *monedula*.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Warnke (ed.), *Die Fabeln der Marie de France* ("Bibliotheca Normannica," ed. H. Suchier, VI [Halle, 1898]), pp. 264-66, no. LXXIX, lines 27-32 (Twelfth century?). Compare with this the Latin version in Hervieux, II, 575: Ex Mariae Gallicae Romulo Fabulae Exortae, no. CSSII. De accipitre et noctuo [noctua]. Accipiter et noctua in una arbore nidificabant, et talis fuit inter eos concordia, ut, mutua familiaritate, alter in alterius nido ova sua poneret. Unde contigit inter pullos Accipitris pullum Noctuae prodire et ab Accipitre foveri et pasci. Factum est autem, ut immundus ille pullus nidum foedaret Accipitris... See K. Huguier, *The Owl and the Nightingale. Sources, Date, Author* (Philadelphia, 1931), p. 50.

<sup>3</sup>Les contes moralisés de Nicole Bozon, Frère Mineur, publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits de Londres et de Cheltenham par Lucy Toulmin Smith et Paul Meyer ("Société des

Since bubo is "anglice 'an howle'," and since Bozon's bubo-fable expressly mentions the proverb of the nest-befouling bird, there follows here the famous passage from the Owl and Nightingale where the nightingale tells a similar story about the owl and where, too, our proverb is cited:

- (98) þarbi men segget a vorbisne:  
 Ðahet habbe þat ilke best  
 þat fuleþ his owe nest.  
 þat oper ȝer a faukun bredde,  
 his nest noȝt wel he ne bihedde;  
 þarto þu stele in o dai  
 leideest þaron þi fole ey.  
 þo hit bloom þat he haȝte  
 of his eyre briddes wraȝte,  
 he broȝte his briddes mete,  
 bihold his nest, iseȝ hi ete;  
 he iseȝ bi one halve  
 his nest ifuled uthalve.  
 þe faukun was wroþ wit his bridde  
 lude ȝal sterne chidde:  
 Segget me, wo havet þis ido,  
 ou nas never icunde þarto;  
 hit was idon ou a lope custe,  
 segge me ȝif ȝe hit wiste!  
 þo quap þat on quad þat oper:  
 Iwis hit was ure oȝe broþer,  
 þe ȝond þat haved þat grete heved;  
 wai þat he nis þarof bireved!<sup>1</sup>

Anciens Textes Français," Paris, 1889), pp. 205 f. This fable is also cited in Förster, Festschrift zum XII. Deutschen Philologentage 1906, pp. 58-60. The Latin above is a translation (MS Harl. 1288) of the French fable of Bozon's, p. 23: "Le huan pria le ostur de norir son fiz; l'autre lui graunta e lui dist..." See also note on pp. 232 f. The date of the Contes moralisés is shortly before 1320 A.D.

Compare with this fable the version in Hervieux, II, 489: Fabulae dictae Romulus Mariae Gallicae XII: De accipitre et bubone. Accipiter in nemore quodam tantam cum bubone contraxerat amicitiam, ut ova bubonis cum suis in proprio nido foveret. Cum autem eduxisset pullos e testis, et pro cibo eis acquirendo in nemus volasset, pulli Bubonis foedaverunt turpiter nidum eius.

The bubo is mentioned as a stercoraceous bird in the eighty-second dialogue of Nicolaus Pergamensis' Dialogus Creaturarum: bubo...defoedat eam (ecclesiam? this is where it nests) stercoribus. See J. G. Th. Grässe, Die beiden ältesten lateinischen Fabelbücher des Mittelalters ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," CXLVIII [1880]), p. 227. The Dialogus Creaturarum belongs most likely not into the 14th, but into the 13th century; see Huguinir, pp. 28, 32.

<sup>1</sup>Lines 98-120. The date of the Owl and Nightingale is 1182-1220 (?). See W. Gadow, Das mittelenenglische Streitgedicht Eule und Nachtigall (Berlin, 1909) ("Palaestra," LXV), pp. 102 f., 218. Huguinir, pp. 22 f., 48 f.



Strabo

De natura strabonis, quae semper delectatur in stercore. Strabo semel volavit per amigdalinas arbores florentes, per rosas et lilia et per alios flores. Tandem projicit in sterquilinum, ubi erant stercora boum et equorum, et inveniens ibi uxorem suam, dixit: Circuivi terram et transvolavi eam. Vidi flores amigdalorum, rosarum et liliorum; sed numquam reperiri locum tam amoenum et delectabilem sicut istum, demonstrato sterquilinio illo.<sup>1</sup>

Disagreeable odor and dirty habits are imputed to starlings.<sup>2</sup> The heron (Reiher) is an avis cacatrix; see above, p. 31. note 1 A.

Turdus

In Clarke's Paroemiologia the thrush is the bird that defiles its nest.<sup>3</sup> This is evident from the juxtaposition of the English proverb and the Latin citation:

It is a bad bird that defileth his own nest.

Turdus ipse sibi malum cacat.

Clarke found the Latin sentence, I take it, in Erasmus' Adagia (p. 37, ed. of 1518). Erasmus was probably also the source for the thrush-riddle in Oedipodiana seu Sphingis aenigmata... per P. Franciscum à S. Barbara è Scholis Piis (Oppau, 1732), riddle no. 943:

Fronde meâ fructicans celsa de stercore viscum  
Me pascit, procerum mox ego pasco gulam.  
Sum volucres inter, mensis gratissimus, alvum  
Exonerans, mortem corpore gigno mihi.

Clarke and Father Francis erred, however, when they identified the thrush with the bird that befouls its nest. The thrush does indeed cacare, but not in the sense in which the other nest-befoulers do. The thrush defecates unto itself something bad, viz. death. The ancients, so e.g. Pliny and Athenaeus tell us, were namely of the opinion that the seed of the mistle ("viscum") from which bird lime ("viscum") is prepared, in order to prosper, must go through the body of a bird: "siquidem viscum

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<sup>1</sup>Hervieux, II, 616, a fable ascribed to Odo de Ceritonia (no. XXXI). Cf. "de scarabone et uxore sua," no. IV in Die Narrationen des Odo de Ciringtonia, p. 130, and "Scabro et eius uxor," a fable ascribed to John of Sheppey in Hervieux, II, 776 f., no. LV.

<sup>2</sup>See R. B. Smith, Bird Life and Bird Lore (New York, 1905), p. 410.

<sup>3</sup>John Clarke, Paroemiologia Anglo-Latina... or Proverbs English and Latin (1639), p. 200.



... non provenit, nisi maturatum in ventre, ac redditum per avium alvum, maxime palumbium, ac turdorum" (Erasmus, *ibid.*). In this wise the bird foolishly assists the fowler to bring about its capture and death, just as the cow provides out of her hide that which is used to whip her: ἐκ τοῦ βόδς ἡ μαστίξ (out of the cow comes the whip).<sup>1</sup>

The turdus-sentence derives ultimately from Plautus: "ipsa sibi avis mortem creat," or "cacat" (according to Burmann's conjecture), and from Servius *ad Aen.* VI, 205 (here the story of birdlime is told) via Isidore of Seville, *Etymol. liber XII*, chap. vii, 71: "Turdela, quasi major turdus, cuius stercore viscum generari putatur. Unde et proverbium apud antiquos erat, Malum sibi avem cacare."<sup>2</sup> The thrush, it is clear, does not belong to the sterquilinous birds that have been exhibited here.

Most of the nest-befouling birds in this section, one recalls, are guilty of dirtying a nest not their own, one that was not built by their parents, but a nest belonging to their foster-parents. It is my impression that this doubly foul deed sets them apart in the mind of the folk from the ordinary nest-befouler, such as the hoopoe, who has the decency to restrict his immundicity to his own roost. Hence the proverb that condemns simple nest-befouling, in its final formulation and transmission, attaches itself rather naturally to the hoopoe, whereas such birds as exhibit a penchant for polluting the nests of their benefactors heap insult on injury and are, therefore, easily conceived of as capable of perpetrating other heinous deeds. The fact that they were, at first, in most cases at least, invited guests of their guardians, readily gives way, I think, to the fancy that they

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<sup>1</sup>Similarly the eagle brings about its death by providing the feathers which are affixed to the arrows which, in turn, pierce it. Cf. Joachim Camerarius, no. XIII, with illustration, text ("aquilam, quae sagittis de suis met pennis concinnatis configitur...") and references to older writers.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Wilhelm von Wyss, *Die Sprüchwörter bei den römischen Komikern* (Zürich, 1889), p. 91. A. Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer* (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 52, 386. Wilhelm Binder, *Medulla Proverbiorum latinorum* (Stuttgart, 1856), p. 151, no. 1770.--Erasmus, by the way, has all the pertinent information on this proverbial expression. It is true, he does not cite Isidore. But he does refer to Plautus and Servius and he suggests the reading *cacat* for *creat* in the Plautus-fragment--long before Burmann! The reference to Clarke I owe to the kindness of Prof. Rich. Jente.

were not even invited guests. They become self-invited guests, gaining entrance by deception. Thus it happens, although exact proof of this assumption can not be adduced, that proverbs and fables, dealing with these ungrateful nest-soilers, develop along lines different from those of the hoopoe-proverb. These birds drop out of the hoopoe-proverb tradition and occur in connection with the lore about the fowl that deposits its eggs stealthily in other birds' nests. And here, it seems, the process whereby the hoopoe eventually displaces the other filthy birds in the proverb anent the nest-befouler, is repeated: from the ranks of the unthankful birds that lay eggs in strange nests, there emerges triumphantly, if somewhat infamously, as cock of the loft the cuckoo.

#### B. Material That Substantiates the Various Interpretations of the Proverb

Most interpretations of the proverb "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" have been in vogue for well-nigh one thousand years. The difference between persons quoting and applying the proverb several centuries ago and persons quoting and applying the proverb today or merely alluding to it when they intend to "moralize" lies, as has been mentioned, in the fact that formerly a knowledge of ornithological data or lore was present, whereas among more recent generations such information, as a rule, has long since vanished.

So far I have only listed the interpretations. I shall now quote passages which substantiate these various claims. The passages fall into three groups. In one group are citations of the proverb, to which short explanations are added. Such passages are found mainly in collections of proverbs. They tell in so many words how the collector interprets the proverb or how he understands it to be interpreted by others. The second group consists of passages in which the proverb is cited or plainly implied in connection with the recital of a fable or a similar narrative. In these passages the proverb or the allusion to it form the "moral" of the tale and as such derive their interpretation from the context. The third group does not deal directly with the proverb. It deals with such medieval accounts of filthy birds as contain interpretations, sometimes labelled "mystice," which preachers might use in their sermons to point a moral. This

third group is subsidiary: filth, whether in the nest or not, denotes a number of moral shortcomings and these shortcomings are or may be the same one meets with the real nest-befoulers.

There is no attempt at completeness in the enumeration of these passages. A classification other than the one on page 64 is possible. A certain amount of overlapping is unavoidable. The passages illustrating the interpretations follow the arrangement on page 64.

To defile one's bed, i.e. to be false to one's wife or husband.---

Nidos commaculans immundus habebitur ales:  
Pelex nec factis claret nec nomine digna.

These are verses 148 and 149 of the Fecunda Ratis by Egbert of Lüttich. The Fecunda Ratis, a collection of fables, proverbs, maxims, and similar material, intended to be used as a textbook in the grammar schools of that time, was finished ca. 1023. As far as is known, this is the first occurrence of our proverb. It is also the oldest example of an interpretation: the paelex, concubine, is the means by which a husband soils his nest.<sup>1</sup>

"Est avis ingrata que defedat sua strata." Talis est upupa, per quam significantur fornicarii et adulteri.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Egberts von Lüttich Fecunda Ratis, zum ersten Mal herausgegeben, auf ihre Quellen zurückgeführt und erklärt von Ernst Voigt (Halle, 1889), p. 36. See also F. Seiler, Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde (Munich, 1922), pp. 91, 71-73; 79, and id., "Deutsche Sprichwörter in mittelalterlicher lateinischer Fassung," Z.f.d.t. Ph., XXXV (1913), 279: "Der zweite vers, 'die kebsse handelt nicht edel und ist nicht des namens (ihres liebhabers) wert,' gibt die nutzanwendung zu dem im ersten enthaltenen spruch. Man soll nicht durch ein kebsweib sein haus verunreinigen." Since it was Egbert's intention to collect proverbs, etc., that were current among the folk and that had never before been written down "in communi sermone, nusquam scripta" (so in his dedication to bishop Adalbold of Utrecht) it is possible that our proverb did exist in the vernacular of the Dutch Lowlands at Egbert's time. On the other hand, Egbert did make use of the classical heritage and of ecclesiastical literature in the compilation of his anthology. And since the "ales commaculans nidum" was known to the ancients and since Egbert does not distinguish in the arrangement of his "rustici sermonis opusculum" between indigenous and non-indigenous proverbs, one is unable to tell whether the proverb concerning the nest-befouling bird is one deriving from classical antiquity or one that sprang from the soil of Egbert's native country or some other West-European land some time during the Middle Ages.

<sup>2</sup>Breslau-Lüben MS (1459). See J. Klapper, Die Sprichwörter der Freidankpredigten (Breslau, 1927), p. 79, note 425.

To defame members of one's family.--"Ericus se ad astandum fratri natura pertrahi dixit, probrosum referens alitem qui proprium polluat nidum." Saxo Grammaticus (ca. 1140-1206) relates this incident in the fifth book of his Gesta Danorum.<sup>1</sup>

Richard Taverner, Proverbs or Adages of Erasmus (London, 1539 and 1552), in referring "It is an evyl byrde that defyleth her owne neste" to Erasmus, evidently has in mind Erasmus' "Qui domui compluitur."<sup>2</sup>

Jörg Wickram, Rollwagenbüchlein (ca. 1555), chapter xxv: a husband finds out that his wife is pregnant by some man with whom she kept company before her marriage; the husband does not talk about this to others.

Also blibe er unnd sy, auch ir vatter and muoter by eeren, unnd ward ir schand nit aussgeschrüwen und den leüten die meüler nit gefült. Es wär schier guot, das mancher also thett; man findt aber ettlich narren, wann sy ire weiber genuog schenden und in ir eigen nest scheissen, nemmen sy die denn wider zuo inen und sitzen dann beyde ins bad.<sup>3</sup>

Henry Smith, Serm. I, 26 (1591): "It becometh not any woman to set light by her husband, nor to publish his infirmities: for they say, That is an evil bird that defileth her own nest."<sup>4</sup>

According to Abraham Tendlau, the German-Jewish equivalent for 'Vogel, der sein Nest beschmutzt' is 'sein eigenes Ponim ver-

<sup>1</sup>Ed. P. E. Müller, I (Copenhagen, 1839), 195. See MSD<sup>3</sup> (Berlin, 1892), II, 147. The first nine books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus, translated by Oliver Elton (London, 1894), Introduction, p. lxxxv. Axel Kock and Carl af Petersens, Östnordiska och Latinska Medeltidsordspråk. Peder Låles Ordspråk och en motsvarande Svensk Samling, II, Kommentar av Axel Kock (Copenhagen, 1891-1892), p. 119. Paul Herrmann, Die Heldensagen des Saxo Grammaticus. Erläuterungen zu den ersten neun Büchern der Dänischen Geschichte des S. G., II (Leipzig, 1922), 394.

<sup>2</sup>See V. Stuckey Lean's Collectanea, IV (1904), 9: Tav., f. 59, 1552. The reference to Erasmus I owe to Professor Richard Jente (Erasmus 4336, p. 659 of the 1518 edition of the Adagia). Cf. W. H. D. Suringar, Erasmus over Nederlandsche Spreekwoorden en Spreekwordelijke Uitdrukkingen van zijnen Tijd (Utrecht, 1873), p. 345, nos. CLXXXVII, 3 and 4: "Qui domi compluitur, huius ne deum quidem miseret."

<sup>3</sup>Ed. J. Bolte, III, 32 f. ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart, 1893, CCXXIX Tübingen, 1903 ).

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in Sidney Smith and G. C. Heseltine, The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs (Oxford, 1935, 1936), p. 229.

schänden' ("ein Glied seiner eigenen Familie herabsetzen").<sup>1</sup>

O. Mensing explains "he schitt in sien egen Nest as de Kuckucksköster" by "er macht seine eigene Familie schlecht!"<sup>2</sup>

And finally, the Times (London), under date of September 7, 1926, quotes our proverb in this context: "Nothing . . . . can excuse the bad taste upon his defenceless family. . . . It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest."<sup>3</sup>

To lack breeding.--Sir Peter Idle instructs his son as follows:

It is an unclene birde defouleth his neste;  
Therefore, as a gentilman lerne curtesie and vertu;  
All honour' and worshipp therof shall sue.<sup>4</sup>

The following passages from Lodge's Rosalynde (1st ed., 1590) and from Shakespeare's As You Like It (end of 16th cent.) seem to belong here:

Lodge: "I pray (quoth Aliena) if your robes were off, what mettall are you made of that you are so satyirical against women? is it not a foule bird that defiles his own nest?"

Shakespeare: (Celia:) "You haue simply misus'd our sexe in your lone prate: we must haue your doublet and hose pluckt ouer your head, and shew the world what the bird hath done to her owne neast."<sup>5</sup>

To be disloyal to one's feudal lord; to offend against the code of one's profession.--"A baron who does not stand by his feudal lord is like a bird that fouls its nest." This is the opinion of Conon de Béthune (end of 12th cent.?).

Li keus s'en est ja vengliés,  
Des haus barons ki or li sont failli.  
C'or les voussist empirier  
Ki sont plus vil ke onkes mais ne vi.

<sup>1</sup>Abraham Tendlau, Sprichwörter und Redensarten deutsch-jüdischer Vorzeit (Frankfurt, n.d. [1860?]), pp. 228 f., no. 721.

<sup>2</sup>O. Mensing, Schleswig-Holsteinisches Wörterbuch, III (1931), col. 362.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Smith-Heseltine.

<sup>4</sup>Extract from Sir Peter Idle's Directions to His Son (15th cent.) ("Early Engl. Text Soc.," Extra Series, no. VIII [1869]), pp. 109 f., lines 40-42.

<sup>5</sup>Shakespeare, As You Like It, IV, 1, lines 192-195. Furness, New Variorum Edition. There also, p. 333, the quotation from Lodge.



Dehait li ber ki est de tel sanlanche  
Com li oisiaus ki conchie (concacare!) sen ni!<sup>1</sup>

Monks and knights should behave according to the standards of their professions: "Es ist ein böser Vogel, der in sein Nest hofiert, und doch tragen's die Mönche nicht aus dem Kloster."<sup>2</sup>

To be ungrateful.--In A. Cohen, Ancient Jewish Proverbs ("Wisdom of the East," New York, 1911), p. 87, no. 185, there is quoted, against ingratitude, and especially as a proverb with which "It is a dirty bird, etc." may be compared, this saying: "Cast no mud into the well from which thou hast drunk." There are some references to rabbinical literature. This Hebrew-Jewish proverb has been quoted before, e.g. in Henry G. Bohn, A Handbook of Proverbs (London, 1857), p. 276: ב'ר א' ד' ש' ת' מ' נ' י' ה' ז' א' meaning "Never cast dirt into that fountain of which thou hast sometime drunk," and in A. Tendlaw, p. 326, no. 949: "Mer muss kaan' Staan in den Brunne' werfe', aus dem mer getrunke' hot," and the explanation is: "man muss nicht Gutes mit Bösem vergelten; besonders: seinen Wohltäter nicht verunglimpfen." According to Tendlaw, this proverb occurs frequently in rabbinical writings (he cites references) and derives ultimately from Deut. 23: 7: "Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land."

To forsake one's fatherland: Fabri de Werdea, Proverbia metrica, n. 166, vs. 393:

Nemo suae patriae confingat scandala, nidum  
Defoedans proprium, pessima fertur avis...

Nymand schendt seyn vaterlandt  
Das er nicht werde genant.  
Eyn vogel der do vnreyn ist  
Vnd schmeyst ym selber in seyn genist.<sup>3</sup>

Henricus Bebelius, Proverbia Germanica collecta atque in Latinum Traducta (1508), no. 44: "Pessima est avis, quae proprium

<sup>1</sup>Chansons de Conon de Béthune Trouveur Artésien de la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ed. Axel Wallensköld (Helsingfors, 1891), pp. 230 f., no. 5, str. 5. Cf. Werner Hensel, "Die Vögel in der provenzalischen und nordfranzösischen Lyrik des Mittelalters," Romanische Forschungen, XXVI (1909), 587.

<sup>2</sup>Klosterspiegel in Sprichwörtern (Bern, 1841), X, 21, quoted in Suringar, Bebel, p. 208, and in Wander, Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon, IV, s.v. Vogel, no. 211 (Wander quotes Klosterspiegel, 191, 21).

<sup>3</sup>The date of this anthology is ca. 1495. This passage is quoted in Suringar, Heinrich Bebel's Proverbia Germanica (Leiden, 1879), p. 207, p. xxviii, n. 4; id., Erasmus, pp. xxx f.



nidum defoedat; hoc est: Malus est, qui vel uxorem vel propriam patriam et familiam, vel suos parentes aut sorores infamat."<sup>1</sup>

The following sentence from Defoe's True-born Englishman (1701), Explanatory Preface: "I am tax'd with bewraying my own Nest, and abusing our nation, by discovering the meanness of our original" seems to illustrate forsaking one's fatherland. It is quoted in Smith-Heseltine. The proverb is used in a similar manner in Walter Scott's Rob Roy (ca. 1817-18), chapter xxvi: ". . . where's the use o' vilifying ane's country and bringing a discredit on ane's kin, before southrons and strangers? It is an ill bird that files its ain nest!"<sup>2</sup>

The unhappy fellow-villagers allude to the proverb when they berate Abdias in Stifter's novel of the same name: "Du hast dein eigen Nest beschmutzt, du hast dein eigen Nest verraten und den Geiern gezeigt" (Chapter II, Deborah). In their opinion, Abdias had betrayed them into the hands of the Bedouins. Finally, "ein schlechter vogel, der sein eignes nest beschmutzt" is explained in Grimm (Deutsches Wörterbuch, s.v. "Vogel") as "z.b. von einem, der über seine heimat, seine landsleute, vor fremden schlecht spricht."

To steal from the place where one happens to stay.--In a way, the following passage belongs under "to be ungrateful." It is cited here under a special heading because the application of the proverb seems to be one of special people to a special occasion: "Ein dummer Vogel, der ihm's Nest verscheisst." So say gypsies and hoboes when they wish to explain why they refrain from stealing or pilfering during their stay at an inn.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The passage is cited in Suringar, Heinrich Bebel's Pro-verbia Germanica, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>This passage appears in W. W. Skeat, Early English Prov-erbs, p. 13, no. 28 and in G. L. Apperson, English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases (London, 1929), p. 323.

<sup>3</sup>Wander, IV, s.v. "Vogel," no. 554. Cf. Wilhelm Medicus, Die Naturgeschichte nach Wort und Spruch des Volkes (Nördlingen, 1867), p. 203: "Dies (das Nest sauber halten) haben die Diebe den Vögeln abgelernt. Als in einem Hause Gänse gestohlen wurden und man einen Insassen deshalb im Verdacht hatte, sagte er zu dem Eigentümer: Ich schwöre, dass ich sie nicht gestohlen habe, kann sie aber Ihnen wieder verschaffen; habe ich doch den einfältigen Kerlen eingeschärft, sie sollten 'das Nest sauber halten.'"

The references, given on the preceding pages, intend to substantiate the various interpretations of the proverb "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest." They belong to the first two groups, that were described on pages 72 f.: they all have to do with the proverb proper which is explained in so many words as having this or that meaning, or the proverb is quoted or alluded to in a situation which interprets the proverb by implication. I shall now briefly call attention to some medieval hoopoe-accounts which were quoted to prove that the hoopoe was known as an unsavory bird. A number of these accounts contain interpretations. They furnish the preacher illustrative material for his sermons. The method is the well-known mystical or allegorical method of medieval theology. It is permissible to cite these interpretations of hoopoe accounts in this connection because we have shown that it is above all the hoopoe which is the bird that fouls its nest. Here are a few pertinent examples:

Rabanus Maurus (see above, p. 46): "haec avis (= upupa) sceleratos peccatores significat."

Odo de Ceritonia (see above, p. 47): "Uppupa...significat mulierem fornicariam, domicellum luxuriosum...mulierem fornicariam, divitem, luxuriosum..."

Joh. Institor (see above, p. 47, n. 1): the filth of the hoopoe is the filth of such monks "qui inhoneste cogitando et immunde...totam suam conversationem...deturpant."

Proverbia Fridanci Sermons (see above, p. 49): "upupa, per quam significantur fornicarii et adulteri."

From the passages cited in this section, one might arrive at the opinion that practically any interpretation of our proverb is possible, provided that the interpretation denounce some sort of moral filth. Such an opinion is correct, if the entire territory where the proverb is known is taken into consideration. If the German-speaking part of Europe is singled out, then the opinion is still correct, except that actually one interpretation seems to be more prevalent than all the others put together. This one interpretation is the sexual one. And this is not surprising in the least. In Germany, the hoopoe has been, and still is to a certain extent, a participant in the Vogelhochzeit. As such it is not merely a filthy bird. It is an obscene, a phallic bird. The role which the hoopoe plays in the German Vogelhochzeit is definitely not the role which it plays in the Bohemian bird-

wedding. There the hoopoe is one of the birds that marry. In the one Bohemian Vogelhochzeit known to me the hoopoe is the bridegroom.<sup>1</sup> The Bohemian bird-wedding is not salacicus, sugges-

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<sup>1</sup>There are two translations of this Bohemian wedding of the birds. One is found in Alfred Waldau, Böhmische Granaten. Czechische Volkslieder (Prague, 1858), p. 132, no. CLXIII. The other is found in Joseph Wenzig, Weatslawischer Märchenschatz (Leipzig, 1857), pp. 241 f. The latter reads:

Des Wiedehopfs Hochzeit

Ich weiss von einem Vogel,  
Wiedhopf wird er genannt;  
Wollt' knüpfen mit der schönen  
Nusskräh' der Ehe Band.

Da wurden zur Hochzeit Gäste  
Geladen in reichster Zahl,  
Sowohl die grossen Vögel,  
als die kleinen allzumal.

Die frohe muntre Lerche,  
Die lud der Gäste Schar;  
Brautführer bei der Hochzeit  
Der Goldkopf Ämmerling war.

Die Wachtel war Kranzeljungfer,  
Und wand den grünen Kranz;  
So zog dann zur Vermählung  
Die Braut in vollem Glanz.

Die Saatkräh' sprach den Segen,  
Der Habicht Zeuge war;  
Dass sie Feindschaft im Herzen trügen,  
Das leugnet' er ganz und gar.

Der Rabe war Koch, und schmorte  
Und buk und sott und briet,  
Dass er voll Russes wurde,  
Dies bezeuget sein Habit.

Und als die Tafel zu Ende,  
Musizierte die Nachtigall.  
Und alle Gäste tanzten  
Unter lautem Jubelschall.

Tanzten, bis Bräutchen meinte,  
Dass es sanft ruhen möcht',  
Worauf die gesprächige Elster  
Die Betten machte zurecht.

So geschah's und geschieht noch immer,  
Das ist nicht etwa erdacht:  
Kommt Wiedhopf zu der Nusskräh',  
Wird alsbald Hochzeit gemacht.

This translation is printed again in J. Wenzig, Bibl. Slavischer Poesien in dt. Übertragung (Prague, 1875), pp. 47 f.

tive. On the other hand, the German Vogelhochzeit is suggestive. One of the most obscene birds in it is the hoopoe. The very name suggests hopfen, hüpfen, aufhüpfen (salire, coire or penem erigere). Since Vogel has taken on the meaning membrum virile and vögelin the meaning futuere, the name of any bird may take on these meanings. But the hoopoe, it seems, enjoys a sort of monopoly. It is the filthy bird. It befouls its nest both as avis cacatrix and as avis phallica. It lives on longer as avis phallica than as avis cacatrix. Eventually, of course, the hoopoe dies too, but the avis phallica exists to this day as the bird that fouls its nest. One of the hoopoe names is "puphahn." E. Martin and Hans Lienhart list it in Wörterbuch der elsässischen Mundarten, I (Strassburg, 1899), 340 f. There it is explained as an onomatopoeic name. This is possible. It is also possible that "pup" means stercus; then "puphahn" would correspond to "Stinkhahn," "Kothahn." It is also possible that "pup" is associated with matters sexual. Again it does not make any difference what "pup" means or how it is interpreted--as long as "puphahn" is the name of the hoopoe, "puphahn" may take on the meaning membrum virile. This it did in the writings of the earthy Martin Montanus of the sixteenth century. We read e.g. in Montanus' Wegkürzer, Chapter IV: "...Dessen er über in zürnet, hat den pupenhan auff den kopff geschlagen,"<sup>1</sup> and in his Gartengesellschaft, Chapter XXXVI: "...Ich habe mein bupenhan gantz und gar abgehauwen" (pp. 289 f., lines 29 and 1); Chapter LVIII (LX): "...mit dem den buppenhan heraus zohe etc. unnd den auff den tisch legt" (p. 317, lines 7 f.); Chapter CVI (CIX): "Ein pfaff verleurt sein buppenhan" (p. 408, line 32); "Der pfaff sein pupenhan, der eben zûr selben zeit wol gerüst stund, zûm fenster hienein bott, den ime der knecht von stundan mit einem messer herabschnitt."

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<sup>1</sup>M. Montanus, Schwankbücher (1557-1566), ed. J. Bolte ("Bibl. d. lit. Ver. Stuttgart," CCXVII [Tübingen, 1899]), p. 18, lines 22 f.

## CONCLUSION

I have never met a hoopoe in the flesh. I have seen illustrations of it and I have admired it in museums, stuffed and mounted. My acquaintance with the hoopoe is academic. Nevertheless, I believe I know the bird and in spite of some of its evil habits, I profess to a love of this bird of abomination. After all, I should be befouling my own nest, if I did not honor and love the subject of this study.

It has not been my purpose to present on these pages all the hoopoe-lore I have collected. It has, rather, been my intention to marshal as much evidence as was feasible and necessary in order to establish certain beliefs of European folk concerning the hoopoe as popular beliefs, i.e. as beliefs that were held more or less in common either over a certain period of time or within the limits of a certain territory. I have been more interested in bringing at least a semblance of order into the many bits of hoopoe-tradition than in discovering and adding one more recondite fact to the record. At the same time I have striven to show, wherever possible, the provenience and the continuance of hoopoe-lore. But above all, I have endeavored to prove that the hoopoe is the bird that befouls its nest and thus to add a mite of information to the study of the European proverb. I grant that my material has not always been sweet and clean. Yet I am not afraid of the warning of the medieval scribe:

"Aves qui nutrit, pro munere stercus habebit."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lübben, *Versus memoriales* (Gymnasialprogramm. Oldenburg, 1866), p. 4. The verses in this collection are gathered from several manuscripts, dating from 1419 to 1479. The line above may be from *Vocabularius Engelhus*. fol. Pap. (1445); one copy at Wolfenbüttel, one at Göttingen; see p. 42.







